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THEOLOGY AS AN EMPIRICAL SCIENCE

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THEOLOGY AS AN EMPIRICAL SCIENCE

BY

DOUGLAS CLYDE MACINTOSH, PH. D.

DWIGHT PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN YALE UNIVERSITY,
AUTHOR OF "THE PROBLEM OF KNOWLEDGE,"
AND "GOD IN A WORLD AT WAR"

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TO
MY BROTHERS AND SISTERS
AND TO THE MEMORY OF
OUR PARENTS
IN THE THOUGHT OF WHOSE FAITH AND LOVE
THERE IS ABIDING INSPIRATION.

Let empiricism once become associated with religion, as hitherto, through some strange misunderstanding, it has been associated with irreligion, and I believe that a new era of religion as well as of philosophy will be ready to begin. *William James.*

If any one is able to make good the assertion that his theology rests upon valid evidence and sound reasoning, then it appears to me that such theology must take its place as a part of science.

T. H. Huxley.

PREFACE

A word of explanation seems called for, in order to remove, if possible, an initial prejudice which is likely to be aroused by the title chosen for this volume. Let it be understood from the first, then, that what is claimed here, essentially, is just this: that it is possible to relate theological theory to that acquaintance with the divine which is to be found in religious experience at its best, as the physical and social sciences, with their theories as to the nature of things and persons, are related to our common human acquaintance with things and persons in sense and social experience. What is aimed at in almost all of the recognized empirical sciences is not a mere description of the processes of our experiencing; otherwise individual psychology would be the only empirical science. What we are after, ordinarily, is an adequate understanding of the nature of the things and persons with which ordinary experience makes us acquainted. And if the reader comes finally to grant not only that genuine knowledge of a divine Reality has been gained through religious experience at its best, but also that this knowledge may be formulated and further developed by means of the inductive procedure advocated and exemplified in the body of this book, the author will not be disposed to quarrel with him over the comparatively unimportant question as to whether or not it is expedient to speak of the resultant theology as "an empirical science."

In order that the theology may be viewed in relation to a harmonious philosophical background, I have appended to the main discussion a sketch of the philosophy of religion, with illustrations of a point of view and method which I have called *Critical Monism.*

D. C. M.

New Haven,
May 1, 1919.

ERRATA

Page 37, line 3: change "casually" to "causally."

Page 37, line 4: instead of "two instances" insert "an instance of the presence and an instance of the absence."

Page 129, first line of last paragraph: change "has" to "had."

Page 145, line 5: insert "the" before "religious."

Page 155, line 3: change "mere" to "more."

Page 269, column 2: transpose lines 17 and 18.

Page 270, column 2: between lines 10 and 11 insert "White, A. D., 3."

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THEOLOGY AS AN EMPIRICAL SCIENCE

THEOLOGY AS AN EMPIRICAL SCIENCE

INTRODUCTION

Theological Method

Theology, in its days of undisputed supremacy, was defined as the science of God. Of late, under the stress of much hostile criticism, there has been a strategic retreat, and the definitions generally favored are modest statements to the effect that theology is the intellectual expression of religion. The general situation, however, has come to be such as calls for a counter-attack, having as its objective the recovery of a scientific status for theology, and a much stronger and more secure consolidation of this scientific position than originally existed.

But, of course, this counter-attack must begin from where theology now is. Whatever else it may have a right to be or the power to become, theology *is* the intellectual expression of religion. And by religion what is meant here more particularly is what may be called experimental religion. There is a broad sense in which the term "religion" may be used, as meaning conscious relation to the divine, the term "divine" standing for either ideal value or supreme reality. Devotion to the divine, i. e., to values worth living for and on occasion worth dying for, may be called fundamental religion. Experimental religion will then be an appropriate term for dependence upon the divine, i. e., upon a supreme or at least higher power, regarded as capable of responding in some way to this attitude of dependence. A conceivable harmony of fundamental and experimental religion is involved in the two-fold fact that on the one hand while in fundamental religion the religious object must be regarded as ideal, it may also be believed to be real, and on the other hand while in experimental religion the re-

ligious object must be believed to be real, it may also be regarded as ideal. Devotion and dependence toward a responsive higher power, believed in and regarded as ideal, would be a synthesis of fundamental and experimental religion.

But while in what follows, we may occasionally refer to fundamental religion, we shall be mainly and almost exclusively concerned with experimental religion. For what theology seeks to systematize is not so much our appreciations of the divine ideal as our knowledge of the divine being. And so, an appropriate title for this work would have been, *The Theology of Experimental Religion.*

Moreover, as in life generally, so in experimental religion, the function of ideas is threefold. Not only do they give expression to experience, particularly to feeling; they supplement experience by representing certain phases of reality which may not at the moment be presented, and they guide practical adjustments and thus lead to further experience. All this theology undertakes to do for experimental religion. It is intimately related to the three main phases of religious consciousness, viz., feeling, cognition and action. Not only does it give intellectual *expression* to religious experience; it aims to *represent* by means of ideas the divine reality with which religion is concerned, and thus to *guide* the religious attitudes of the subject and lead him to the kind of religious experience most to be desired.

The question to be faced is as to whether theology, understood thus as description of the divine reality, can be made truly scientific. And what we mean by "scientific" is not merely logical in the older deductive sense, i. e., consistent with presuppositions. Ancient and mediæval science, modelled upon the geometrical method, was essentially abstract, *apriori*, unempirical. With its formal, deductive logic it was an instrument of criticism and discovery within but narrow limits. It was the lesser organ of exact knowledge. Modern science, with its concrete, empirical, inductive method, is an instrument of criticism and discovery within limits set only by human experience itself. It is, as Francis Bacon called it, the *novum organum*, the new and greater organ of exact knowledge. Whereas the older science, in the main, undertook no more

than to measure the consistency of conclusions with assumed premises, modern science admits assumptions only to test them by the facts of experience, thus enabling man the better to adjust himself to his environment and to be a factor in its changes. In view, then, of the magnificent contribution of the physical, mental and social sciences to human progress, the question here raised is as to whether religious knowledge may not eventually become scientific in the full, modern sense of the word, or in other words, whether theology may not become a descriptive, or empirical, science. If this were to happen, results of the most momentous importance might be expected, for religion has always been a potent factor in directing human development.

As human knowledge in general has been becoming gradually more scientific, it has been growing more and more evident that the effect of science upon religious knowledge—real or supposed—is to be nothing short of revolutionary. One has but to read such books as Draper's "Conflict between Religion and Science," or Andrew D. White's "History of the Warfare between Science and Theology," to find sufficient evidence to show that at least outside of the theological field in the strictest sense of the term, dogmatism in the name of religion has almost invariably suffered ultimate defeat at the hands of empirical investigation, and has been forced to abandon field after field to the scientific method. Science has thus gained steadily increasing prestige, and theology constantly growing disrepute.

It is perhaps not surprising that after all these defeats of theology on the territory of her neighbors, they should combine to deny her any standing-ground at all. Dogmatic theology, as "queen of the sciences," was a despotic monarch. She undertook to prescribe for all the others first principles and limits beyond which they must not presume to go. All went smoothly enough so long as the sciences—if such we may call their first crude beginnings—were subservient. The rule of theology was a benevolent despotism. But as soon as the developing sciences began to show a spirit of independence and to appeal more fearlessly to experience for themselves, theology began to rule them with a rod of iron; some of them, indeed, beginning to be

openly insubordinate, she would have dashed in pieces, as a potter's vessel. But the sciences gathered strength and united to dethrone the tyrant, dogmatic theology, and by this time she has received at their hands double for all her sins. And yet their anger is not turned away, but their hand is stretched out still. Among the empirical sciences theology can find none so poor as to recognize her, much less do her reverence. Moreover, even the world at large, including hosts of persons who still think of themselves as religious, is coming to share in the contempt of the scientists for theology. What is the ultimate meaning of this development? Was Comte right after all, and is theology destined soon to disappear before the steadily encroaching advance of the positive sciences?

And if theology disappears, what will become of experimental religion, that practical relation of dependence upon a higher power, which is of the essence of religion in the ordinary sense of the term? Is J. G. Frazer right, and are we to believe that religion, having arisen because of man's despair of magic, is in turn to give way to science, whose progress is at once both cause and effect of man's ultimate despair of religion?

There are many who view with ill-concealed satisfaction what they regard as the steady rationalization of theology and religion out of existence. But from the very beginning of modern scientific research there have been those who have tried to secure for the dethroned "queen of the sciences" a sheltered realm beyond the reach of empirical investigation, within which she might dogmatize to her heart's content—a realm of "over-beliefs," concerning which the scientist as such must remain agnostic, but which, it is triumphantly maintained, he is as unable to disprove as the theologian is to prove. Thus many modern scientists are benevolently disposed to patronize theology by handing over to her the undisputed possession of such fields as are supposed to be hopelessly beyond the reach of human experience. But can theology safely consent to such an arrangement? If ideas as to a supposed reality cannot find place in any science, are they a part of genuine knowledge at all? Are they not possibly mere products of confused imagination? Must they not at best remain comparatively inert in the en-

lightened human consciousness; and after a period of religious indifferentism and easy-going eclecticism, must not serious thought be expected finally to cease to occupy itself with such manifestly fruitless speculations?

But there is another alternative for our thought. With the progress of science and general information, theology and religion have been developing in rationality. Instead of being rationalized out of existence, may it not be that religion and its theology are being rationalized into a universally valid and finally satisfactory form? The history of practical religion may fairly be regarded as a prolonged empirical investigation. It has proceeded according to the thoroughly accredited "trial and error" method. And while hopelessly unscientific theological notions are being steadily eliminated by scientific thought and investigation, may not theology itself possibly be so rejuvenated by modern methods as to become more than ever able to give to religion the knowledge it needs? Perhaps empirical science will yet prove to be the best friend in disguise that religion has ever had. In the process of removing those things that are shaken, may it not become evident that things which are not shaken still remain? And may not thus a firm foundation be found for theology as a descriptive or empirical science? Indeed, the surest way of meeting successfully the attacks of the sciences is for theology herself to become genuinely scientific. If this can be accomplished, she may yet regain in all its essentials that honorable place she once held as queen of the sciences, in their unanimous recognition of her as entitled to the highest station in the commonwealth of science.

If we glance over the history of the development of theological method, we can readily see that, from a comparatively early period, theology has sought to become scientific. In becoming "systematic theology" evidence was given of her good intentions. With the aid of deductive logic a system of doctrine was elaborated, resting upon the premises of religious tradition to be sure, but having the merit of at least aiming to eliminate all contradiction between the doctrines included. Thus at an early stage in the history of the greater religions and of Christianity in particular, we find the theologian as the more or less scientific expositor and systematizer of a body of traditional

lore, interpreted as "the Word of God." Deduction from this body of premises was the one recognized theological procedure. Theological error was to be corrected by further examination of the traditional basis, together with more rigidly logical deduction therefrom. A questioning of this traditional basis could be met only by increasing dogmatism as to fundamentals, and by adding to the anathemas for those who presumptuously dared to doubt the plain "Word of God." Thus honest inquirers were repelled and became the avowed enemies of theology and rebels against her authority. And still for centuries the Church, Catholic and Protestant, has clung to the old traditionalistic dogmatism—moved in part, it would seem, by a misplaced confidence; in part, by a mistaken fear.

Of course scientific investigation could not be kept forever from turning to the traditional records which had been made the basis of dogmatic theology; and so, following upon the preliminary work of "the higher criticism," there is growing up a highly scientific knowledge of the contents of that religious tradition. But this science, a central part of which is commonly called "biblical theology," is not really theology at all. Strictly speaking, it is a branch of the history of religion, nothing more. It gives us scientific knowledge, not of what God does and is, but of what certain men have experienced and thought and expressed in spoken or written words. Thus it comes that a very large proportion of what is taught in modern theological institutions, while it has become scientific, indeed, is no longer theology, but simply history. Time was when the Protestant Professor of Old Testament and New Testament Exegesis was, as such, like the Catholic Professor of "Positive Theology" (Biblical and Patristic), a theologian; but from the modern point of view this is no longer true of the biblical scholar except as he may turn aside from the particular scientific task in hand. Indeed it is scarcely aside from the mark to say that the bulk of what is taught in modern theological institutions is made up of science which is no longer theological and theology which is not yet scientific.

But before undertaking to discuss in detail the progressive modification of theological procedure in the general direction

of a truly scientific method, it may be well to present a table of *Types of Theological Method.*

I. Conservative.
  A. Traditionalistic.
    1. Ecclesiastical.
      a. Uncritical.
      b. Critical.
    2. Biblical.
      a. Uncritical.
      b. Critical.
    3. Individual.
      a. Uncritical.
      b. Critical.

II. Radical.
  B. Rationalistic.
  C. Empirical.
    1. Mystical.
    2. Eclectic.
      a. Individual.
      b. Social.
        (1) Psychological.
        (2) Historical.
          (a) Restricted.
          (b) Universal.
      c. Pragmatic.
    3. Scientific.

Theological methods may be divided, as this table suggests, into two main types, *conservative* and *radical.* These terms are not to be taken as necessarily implying that the doctrinal content of the former is more "orthodox" than that of the latter. What is indicated is the way in which that content is obtained.

The conservative method is dependent upon external authority. Beginning with the teachings of its recognized traditional authority, whether it be Church or Bible or individual Teacher, its aim is to conserve as fully as possible the whole of the doctrinal content received. If the theologian can remain sufficiently uncritical toward his accepted authority, he may be able to conserve practically all of the traditional content unimpaired, and such values as it has for the life of the present

will thus be made available. If, however, on grounds of reason or experience it becomes impossible for him to retain all of this traditional content, the method comes to be one of progressive subtraction from the originally accepted content. This process is damaging to religious certainty; for while the critical traditionalist may feel sure that all the vital and permanently tenable doctrines of his religion are included in what he still believes, he can never be quite certain—at least until he has adopted some new method of determining his beliefs—that still further subtractions may not have to be made. And so there tend to be two types of traditionalist with reference to the authority recognized, the one still uncritical and the other more critical and progressive. Moreover, the modern transition first from the ecclesiastical form of the traditionalistic method to the biblical, and further from the biblical form to the individual, itself indicates a growing progressiveness and desire for independence and freedom from any external absolute authority in theological construction. While a sense of the value of the traditional content tends to make the theologian cling to some form of the conservative or traditionalistic method, an increasing desire for religious certainty may eventually lead him to adopt some one of the radical methods.

The radical or independent methods are not all of them necessarily in the end less conservative of vital religious truth than the so-called conservative methods. Indeed it sometimes happens that "live dangerously" is a safer motto in the end than "safety first." The radical theologian, interested primarily in religious and theological certainty, refuses to begin with a docile acceptance of any doctrinal content solely upon the basis of its having been taught by some recognized institution or book or person, no matter how great the prestige of that authority. On the contrary he adopts some criterion which he can apply as an independent thinker and investigator, and accepts only such doctrines as can be built from the ground up by this radical method. Unlike the conservative's theology, his theological system will at first be poor in content; but if it contains less truth, it also contains less error, and it has the advantage of having from the first been more careful than the other to make provision for certainty. Moreover, if the radical method has

been happily chosen, it may lead in the end to a system containing all the vital truths to which the traditionalist clings so tenaciously but often with so little final certainty. At any rate the radical method is proceeding by *addition*, a circumstance which constantly gives help with respect to certainty and hope with respect to content, whereas the conservative method, as we have seen, having ultimately to proceed by way of repeated *subtraction*, in the face of this partial loss of content begins to lose certainty with respect to the remaining content, and may in the end lose all religious certainty and theological content together.

Turning to an examination of the particular types of radical theological method, we find that comparatively soon after its emancipation from dogmatic traditionalism, theology tends to employ a rationalistic, speculative procedure as a means of becoming scientific. Instead of starting from the premises of some particular tradition as to some particular revelation, the rationalistic or speculative theology claims to start with premises universally admitted by reasonable beings, whether they are religious or not. Then, proceeding by strictly logical processes, it would compel all rational, i. e., consistent thinkers to accept positive religious conclusions as to the being, nature and activity of God.

At first, in scholasticism, there was an overlapping of the processes of dogmatic traditionalism and this dogmatic rationalism. The speculative theology of rationalism was constructed as a support to the dogmatism of the church. But in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, with the beginning of modern philosophy, speculative theology cut loose from religious tradition and undertook to furnish a theology *more geometrico*. This "geometrical method" was characteristic of the more advanced thinkers of the eighteenth century. Then again, in spite of Kant's criticism, it reappeared in the nineteenth century, especially among the Hegelian theologians. It is not many years since a Glasgow professor of theology, the late Dr. Hastie, published a little book entitled "Theology as Science," claiming to set forth a way of universal rational demonstration for the essentials of theological doctrine.

Now as compared with the traditionalistic dogmatism this

rationalistic method has certain advantages. It is free from any bondage to external traditional authority. Moreover, it makes much of consistency, not only within the theological system, but with all human knowledge. But historically rationalism has suffered great impoverishment of religious content. It has lightly parted with some of the most vital and precious doctrines of historic religion, simply because it could not prove them, there being no way of doing so without appealing to religious experience. And indeed this whole independent rationalistic development can be taken as symptomatic of religious decline. There is a persistence of religious interest with a cessation of religious experience. The attempt is made to secure by the comparatively cheap and easy process of thinking what was formerly obtained through the struggles and achievements of personal religious experience. On psychological grounds, therefore, there is reason to fear that the cessation of deep religious experience will lead to a lower appreciation of religious values, religious interest will decline and life tend toward irreligion. The history of modern philosophy bears out this surmise; religion is being crowded into a very small corner by the majority of present-day philosophers. But the chief reason for this fact is doubtless to be found in the failure of rationalistic theology to make good its claims, even with reference to the reduced theological content which it claimed to prove. It claimed to get rid of all dogmatism and to give complete rational certainty; but criticism has shown up the logical discrepancies and the cleverly concealed or unconscious begging of the question involved in all purely speculative theology. And so it is made to appear that, instead of one species of unscientific theological dogmatism, we have two, the rationalistic as well as the traditionalistic.

There is not space here to recount in detail the evidence against rationalistic theology; but one particular instance may be cited as an example. It is a way of arguing which, under one disguise or another, is to be found pretty generally in such speculative theology as builds upon modern philosophical idealism. Knowledge of reality is possible, it is claimed, for to deny this proposition is to assume it. But, it is claimed, all that we know or ever can know is essentially idea, thought-construct; and so

reality, we may conclude, is idea, a rationally constructed system of ideas. In other words, the real is intelligible, rational; and only the intelligible, the completely rational is ultimately real. Absolute Reality is the Absolute Idea, Absolute Reason, the "Concrete Universal," the perfectly logical within the completely psychological, a completely rational and all-inclusive Experience, Mind, or Spirit. And so a foundation is laid in a purely speculative way for the characteristic theological doctrines of absolute idealism.

But the argument is fallacious and cannot be made demonstrative. Not to dwell upon the possibility of an undogmatic agnosticism as a third alternative between the assumption that Reality as a whole is intelligible and the denial that any knowledge of any reality is possible, it should be insisted that the possibility of knowledge does not imply that the knowable must be idea; what we know does not need to be identical in nature with what we know with, viz., ideas. There is equivocation in the use of the term "rational." The sense in which it is identifiable with intelligible is not the sense in which it necessarily involves mentality. In the one case it means capable of being understood, in the other case it means capable of understanding.

Speculative theology, even at the best, has been felt by practical religion to be very unsatisfactory in its doctrinal content, particularly with regard to human individuality, free will, and the nature of moral evil; but its strong point was supposed to be its absolute logical certainty. When, however, its inescapable logical fallacies are shown up, it loses all claim upon our acceptance. Its certainty vanishes, and with it goes its whole doctrinal content. Nor should anything more than this have been expected. Speculation can only elucidate what is involved in a hypothesis. It cannot, apart from any resort to experience, provide verification.

The truly scientific method, as modern men well know, is not the "high and dry apriori road" of speculative thought, but the method of observation and experiment, of generalization and theoretical explanation. And if theology is to become really scientific it must be by becoming fundamentally empirical. Now there have been developed not a few types of theological procedure which undoubtedly appeal to religious experience;

it remains to inquire whether any of these methods are empirical in the scientific sense.

The oldest, or one of the oldest, not only of empirical methods, but of all methods in theology, is the mystical method, if method it deserves to be called. The mystic is the dogmatist *par excellence*. From a contemplation of the Divine Being, he has passed into a psychological state of religious "rapture," or "union" with God, which thenceforth becomes not only the basis of assurance of the existence of God, but also—in spite of all assertions of the ineffableness of the divine—the source of certain suggestions as to God's nature and relation to the universe and to man. In the mystical state, attention is so concentrated upon the religious Object, that God alone seems real; the physical world and the finite self seem to have lost their separate existence, to be absorbed in the Absolute One; the lapse of time is as if it were not, and all sense of the reality of evil is submerged in the vision of Absolute Goodness. And so, where the thorough mystic is able to break loose from the traditional doctrines of the practical religion of his community, he tends to assert not only the reality and absolute sufficiency of God, but also that God alone is real, that the material world, the finite self, time and evil are unreal—mere illusions of "mortal mind." And, curiously enough, these are approximately the doctrines of extreme absolute idealism, as evolved by the method of rationalistic speculation. It ought not to surprise us, therefore, to find an alliance sometimes existing between extreme mysticism and speculative idealism. But mutual corroboration is not necessarily a proof of truth. There may be agreement and mutual confirmation in error. We have seen how fallacious the arguments of rationalistic speculation can be, and as for mysticism, while we may regard its experiences as a fruitful source of suggestion of theological theories, these theories ought not to be regarded as verified save as they stand the test of normal, practical religious life. The reality of God and the absolute sufficiency of the Divine goodness and power for the religious needs of man, involved as they are in the assurance of the mystic, may be allowed to stand, since practical religion at its best confirms them. Moreover, it may very well be a distinct advantage to have one's subjective assurance of these

fundamentals of theology heightened through a sane and moderate mysticism. But that the material world, the finite self, time and evil are real, we are entitled to affirm, even if their reality should be denied by both the mystic and the speculative theologian; the hypothesis of their reality is amply verified in that normal practical experience without which even mystics and speculative theologians could not long continue to live.

But the theological method of the mystic is not the only empirical method. The mystic is almost compelled by the imperative suggestions of his peculiar psychological state to make certain affirmations. There are others, however, who, while they do appeal to experience, seem to feel comparatively free to pick and choose their theological beliefs, without acknowledging any absolute compulsion in the matter on the part of either traditional authority, speculative metaphysics, or mystical suggestion. Such a way of constructing a theology we may call the eclectic method. It has been the theological method characteristic of most of the advanced theological thought of the nineteenth century, and is still widely dominant.

In its simplest form, however, the eclectic method has tended to appear whenever the individual has been allowed freedom in thought and religious life. This simple determination of one's religious creed according to one's likes and dislikes we may call the individual eclectic method. There is a suggestion of it in Pascal's principle of appealing to the heart rather than the head in matters of faith, and also in Coleridge's rather vague criterion: "Whatever finds me brings with it an irresistible evidence of its having proceeded from the Holy Spirit." But essentially the same thing is commonly met with in statements of religious opinion, prefaced with such expressions as "I feel," "My impression is," or "I like to believe." More pretentious products of this individual eclectic method are occasionally to be found in articles or booklets bearing such titles as these:—"My Confession"; "My Religion"; "What I Believe"; "The Religion of a Physician"; "The Religion of a Literary Man"; The Religion of the Future" (always the writer's own), etc. Such statements are interesting human documents, but there is commonly so little sign of any definite principles of method underlying the construction that the reader's reaction is not likely to be in the direction of serious

discussion for the purpose of discovering or communicating religious truth; rather will he be tempted to view questions of religious creed as matters of taste, and say, "De gustibus non disputandum." And so the chief criticisms to be made against this individual method are that it is scarcely a method at all, that it is an exhibition of an almost unrelieved subjectivism in religion, and that it must tend, unless corrected, in the direction of a radical religious scepticism. It is mere impressionism in theology, and so, except that in a vague way it appeals to experience, it is at the opposite pole from the scientific attitude and procedure.

But there are other forms of the eclectic method, which undertake to relieve this undue subjectivism. The most significant of these we may group under the designation, social eclectic method, inasmuch as they undertake to furnish a norm from some social source by means of which the vagaries of individual feeling and preference may be corrected. These social norms are either religio-psychological, religio-historical or sociological.

Of the application of the social norm in its psychological form the outstanding representative is Schleiermacher, the so-called "father of modern theology." His norm is the religious feeling common to the members of a religious group, and forming the real bond of their union in this group. Theology, according to Schleiermacher, normally is the spontaneous expression in terms of intellectual symbols, of this religious consciousness of the religious community, a consciousness which the individual comes to share by becoming, in a vital experiential sense, a member of the community. Religion is defined primarily in terms of feeling. It is the feeling of absolute dependence, i. e., of dependence upon an absolute Being who acts upon our lives through the universe. But there are specific differences in this religious feeling in the different religions of the world, and in Christianity the feeling of absolute dependence is modified by the feeling that the Being upon which man is absolutely dependent is the absolutely dependable "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." This Christian "God-consciousness" or religious feeling was originally an achievement of the historic Jesus, and having been communicated by him in a natural, psychological way to the primitive Christian community, and propagated, through vari-

ous vicissitudes, by the vitally religious Christian community—the church within the church—down to our own day, this Christian consciousness of the church is at once the source of religious salvation to the individual and the ultimate norm of the church's theology.

The merits of this form of eclectic theology are undoubtedly many. It has all the freedom and independence of rationalistic theology, and is able to make room for tests of logical consistency which will no doubt easily make it at least as rational as ordinary rationalism. At the same time it avoids all such false pretences as the claim of rationalism to demonstrate its doctrines out of pure thought, without the necessity of experimental confirmation. Its appeal to the heart is good—when the heart appealed to is good. It provides for the ultimate conservation of the vital essence of traditional theology—provided it is conserved in the faith of the community. Thus it may possibly be justified in claiming to combine the strength of traditionalism and rationalism without suffering from the peculiar disabilities of either.

But it is not only this appeal to religious feeling, with its guarantee that the theology will be vitally empirical, that makes the system of Schleiermacher an approach to the ideal of theology as an empirical science; nor even is it this empirical emphasis, together with its provision for such logical tests as mean recognition of the ideal of rationality. The appeal to the religious consciousness of the community is also a step in the direction of the sort of objectivity of control that one finds in the established sciences. And indeed this theology of the Christian consciousness is very commonly characterized as the "science of the Christian faith." On the one hand it undertakes to set forth what the vitally religious Christian community believes, and in order to do this it must make use of strictly scientific psychological and historical processes. On the other hand it undertakes to set forth what the Christian religious man ought to believe, and so it may be grouped with logic, ethics and æsthetics as a normative science, i. e., a science which describes the processes which are necessary for the realization of an ideal. Thus it may be claimed, with a fair show of reason, that a theology of the type under consideration is, upon these two counts,

a science: as setting forth what has been and is believed, it is a descriptive science; as setting forth what ought to be believed, it is a normative science.

But upon closer examination these claims seem to be not quite valid, if taken to mean that we have here a theology that is, as such, an empirical science. It is easy to dispose of the contention that there can be a scientific theology of a psychological or historico-psychological sort. As dealing with the observable life of man, the discipline may be, like the so-called "biblical theology," scientific enough. But as scientific, it is not theology; as theology, doctrine about God, it is not a science, but simply a systematized expression of the feelings expressive of a common religious experience. As science, it is simply a highly specialized branch of anthropology.

But what about the so-called normative science of theology? If we can have a scientific description of what ought to be believed about God by the religious community, does not this necessarily result in scientific knowledge of what God does and is? On the surface it would seem so; but it must be remembered that the "ought to be believed" depends upon an "if." Change the "if"—the purpose or ideal for the sake of which the theology is valued—and you change the content of the theology which ought to be believed. And thus, within the limits of a normative science of religious belief, there might be included many systems of theological fiction. Evidently, then, a merely normative science of religious faith does not amount to theology as a descriptive science. It does not decide, as true science does, between rival claims to truth.

Thus we see that the theology of Schleiermacher is still highly subjective and essentially eclectic rather than scientific. It states no adequate universal principle upon which the choice of the *Christian* religious consciousness is to be justified. From the standpoint of other modifications of the feeling of absolute dependence (within Mohammedanism and Buddhism, for example) other systems of theology ought to be believed. Again, there is made explicit no adequate norm for the determination of just what religious doctrines do correctly express the Christian consciousness itself. It was only what was to be expected, when Schleiermacher's own *Glaubenslehre* was fol-

lowed by a host of theologies "of the Christian consciousness," each claiming exclusive validity, however widely they might differ among themselves. Moreover, there was in Schleiermacher's system an ambiguity as to the relation of the theology to his metaphysics, which aggravated the impression of subjectivism. The Christian theology of the "heavenly Father" did not seem to fit in with the at times almost Spinozistic identification of the object of religious dependence with the universe. It suggested the highly objectionable "double truth" theory of the later scholastics.

Probably much of the unsatisfactoriness of Schleiermacher's theological method has its roots in his rather one-sided emphasis upon feeling as the essential element in religion. Where feeling is made the primary thing in religious experience, the best that can be done in theology is to formulate a normative science of the intellectual conditions of selected varieties of religious feeling. It is only, as we shall see, when the volitional element is taken as primary, that the basis can be laid for theology as a descriptive science.

The Ritschlian theology is significant, methodologically, as marking the attempt to provide a more definite objective norm for the theology of the Christian consciousness. Instead of the appeal primarily to the feeling of the religious community, a course which had led to the disconcerting variety of theologies of the Christian consciousness, Ritschl turned for objectivity to history. His appeal was not to the history of religion in general, however. His theological method was religio-historical, but only in a restricted sense. The true norm for religious thought, from this point of view, is the historic Christian gospel, the Christian revelation, i. e., the historic Jesus, religiously evaluated as divine. The historic Christ, as founder of the Christian experience of salvation from sin, has for human consciousness the function and value of God. The task of theology, then, is to expound in detail what is involved in this Christocentric principle. Christian doctrine is the expression of the religious consciousness of one who has found satisfaction and moral deliverance through viewing the person and work of Christ as the Divine Word to men. And so, while religious knowledge has to do with objective facts of human history, it

is nevertheless not made up of judgments of historic fact, but of value-judgments, expressions of appreciation of the worth of these facts for practical religious experience. And so self-sufficient did Ritschl regard the Christian consciousness with its experiential knowledge of religious value, that he maintained that theology ought to have nothing to do with metaphysics. It would only needlessly imperil Christian faith, if the attempt were made to combine its value-judgments with our natural knowledge of the world in a system of rational metaphysics. Compromise and mutual concession would imperil the content of faith, and submitting the value-judgments of religion to the speculative consciousness for its approval would tend to undermine the Christian certainty.

The Ritschlian movement has meant progress in the direction of a scientific empirical theology. On the one hand its emphasis upon a definite historical norm has provided greater objectivity of control in the expression of the religious consciousness. On the other hand, the doctrine of religious value-judgments has brought out a fact of fundamental importance for the making of theology scientific, viz., that appreciation of religious value is an important element in the recognition of revelation, or the presence of the divine within the field of human experience.

But the Ritschlian theology is still too subjective to be really scientific. In the first place Ritschl and his earlier followers under-estimated the difficulties in the way of an assured scientific knowledge of the person and work of the historic Jesus. In the second place there is a certain narrow and unscientific dogmatism in assuming from the outset that in the appeal to the history of religion for objectivity only what the Christian religion has to offer is to be considered. In the third place the setting forth of the doctrine of religious value-judgments against a background of Kantian agnosticism has accentuated the impression of subjectivity. If experience gives us no access to ultimate reality, but is concerned with appearance only, our knowledge is likewise necessarily limited to the realm of appearance. Now there are two things the mind can do with appearances: it can describe them and it can evaluate them. Accord-

ing to the Ritschlian theory, we must get our theology from the evaluations. Ritschl himself, followed by Herrmann and some others, said theology was made up of the religious value-judgments themselves. Kaftan on the contrary held that theological propositions are theoretical judgments, postulates as to ultimate reality, based upon religious value-judgments, but not themselves judgments of value. The undue subjectivity of the religious judgments is evident in either case. According to Herrmann theological judgments may be allowed to conflict with the legitimate conclusions of science, and there is no recourse to metaphysics for reconciliation. According to Kaftan contradiction between science and theology is to be avoided only by assigning to the latter a transcendent realm inaccessible to either scientific description or to any genuinely cognitive metaphysics. This fear of the Ritschlians to submit the content and certainty of the Christian faith to the test of metaphysics is partly due to their general agnosticism and consequent distrust of metaphysics, as undertaking to deal with the unexperienceable and therefore unknowable. But it is also due in part to their virtual, if partially veiled, religious agnosticism. Recognizing the subjective conditions of religious cognition, they fail to secure its objective validity. This is because, with their doctrine of the inaccessibility of ultimate Reality, divine or other, to human experience, they have excluded the idea of a scientific verification of religious judgments. And so what was said in criticism of Schleiermacher's "Science of the Christian Faith" applies also to the Ritschlian theology, in spite of the transfer of emphasis from psychology to history. Descriptive science as a branch of the history of religion and of thought, and so as a branch of anthropology, the science of *man*, there may be; but theology, a science descriptive of the divine Reality—this is still to seek.

Recently the attempt has been made, notably by Troeltsch, to direct eclectic theology into more objective and universally valid channels by making its religio-historical norm universal, instead of narrowly and dogmatically begging the question of the validity of the Christian gospel at the outset, as Ritschlianism does. In this undertaking Troeltsch has been influenced by the "religio-historical school" of New Testament scholars, who

have approached the study of the beginnings of Christianity from the point of view of the universal history of religion. Troeltsch wishes to be the systematic theologian of the movement. His program calls for a preliminary acquaintance with the facts of the history and the psychology of religion. Then, as transitional to theology, there are questions of religious epistemology and of the philosophy of the history of religion to be answered. In conformity with the general Kantian definition of the valid as the rational within the empirical, Troeltsch maintains that on the one hand valid religion must be empirical, i. e., historical and individually vital—even somewhat mystical; and on the other hand, it must be rational, not in the sense of the older, speculative rationalism, but in the sense of being systematized in terms of concepts which are inherent in universal reason. Theology, then, to be acceptable must be rational as well as empirical (historical and experiential). But the philosophy of history, applied to the history of religion, leads to the conclusion, according to Troeltsch, that the historical religion best adapted to our modern Western culture is Christianity. And so, after a systematic determination of the essence of Christianity, the way is clear for the setting forth of the theology of this essential Christianity in rational form. The final stages of this process will be frankly metaphysical. At this point again Troeltsch departs radically from Ritschlianism; but the development of his thought in this direction can be readily understood as due to the attempt to relieve the subjectivity of the "dogmatics" of his theological teacher, Kaftan, with the aid of the interpretation of metaphysics offered by his philosophical teacher, Dilthey. According to Kaftan, theology is a system of theoretical judgments about the unexperienceable ultimate Reality, based upon an experiential consciousness of religious value. According to Dilthey all metaphysics is simply the exposition and theoretical defence of beliefs about the unexperienceable ultimate Reality, of which beliefs the real basis is to be found in practical and æsthetic, i. e., non-rational motives, so that no system of metaphysics can be more than a practically or æsthetically grounded faith. What Troeltsch does is to take Kaftan's Christian "dogmatics" and, modifying it as far as may be necessary for rationality, defend it against

rival world-views as best fulfilling the demands of metaphysics in Dilthey's sense of the term.

Troeltsch's theology has the advantage of being, from the point of view of modern philosophy, more objective than Ritschlianism. This it is by virtue of its more universal empirical basis (in the general history of religion), its emphasis upon rationality as a criterion of validity, and its recourse to metaphysics for final confirmation. But his method does not avail to make theology a part of real science. Indeed, from his point of view any such possibility is excluded from the beginning. He cannot even claim that it is knowledge; strictly speaking, he has to confess to an ultimate agnosticism. His eclectic approval of Christianity, as valid for our time and place and culture, is symptomatic of the incurable subjectivity which remains in his religious system. And, under these circumstances, the appeal to rationality as the ultimate criterion of validity in religion, has its dangers, as critics have pointed out. But, on the other hand, the surest way of guarding against the loss of vital truth through the negations of "rationalism" is not to give up the attempt to be rational. Rather is it to undertake to be both rational and empirical to the point of being thoroughly scientific. While recognizing an ultimate place for wisdom, in addition to scientific information, in philosophy, provision must be made whereby as much as possible of our religious thinking, as well as of our thinking about religion, will be turned into descriptive science.

Another contemporary theologian may be mentioned here, viz., Wobbermin, whose method, which he calls the "religio-psychological," is really an eclectic combination of elements derived from those other procedures which we have called "eclectic." Like Troeltsch, he was at one time a student under Kaftan and Dilthey and has been led to a similar departure from Ritschlianism with respect to metaphysics. Theology without metaphysics is impossible, he declares. Religion is essentially a tendency toward the transcendent, and its ideas have to do with the transcendent. The psychology of religion, such as that of William James, has to do with the varieties of religious experience; but inherent in religion is an interest in the truth of its ideas about the transcendent. Here, then, it is

necessary to add to the descriptive method of James the constructive religious method of Schleiermacher. The theologian must set forth religious ideas as true, and so he must speak as one who is able to share the experience and point of view of a religious community. And, according to Wobbermin, he is justified in regarding as true the ideas involved in the religious experience which is ethically best, if they turn out, as he believes they will, to be metaphysically defensible. His position is thus somewhere between that of the older Ritschlians, whom he regards as too narrow and dogmatic, and that of Troeltsch, whom he regards as endangering unnecessarily, through his rationalism, some of the practically essential elements of Christian faith.

Wobbermin's course would seem to be one of considerable wisdom, on the supposition that theology cannot be made really scientific. But as it stands it has just those defects which are connoted by the term unscientific. In spite of all that is done to reduce subjectivity and dogmatism to a minimum while conserving the values of Christian faith, the theology remains essentially eclectic, and the confession has to be made that a certain circle in the reasoning is unavoidable. And with reference to the theological methods of both Troeltsch and Wobbermin, with their recourse to metaphysics, it may be remarked that while the addition to an eclectic theology of the further rational test involved in metaphysics furnishes a further check upon subjective vagaries and uncertainties, it does not suffice to transform a mere faith into knowledge. It may show the religious hypothesis to be theoretically permissible; it does not of itself amount to verification, or proof that the belief is true.

One more eclectic theological method remains to be considered, viz., that of religious pragmatism. Here the norm, as distinct from the psychological and historical, is ultimately sociological. Its principle may be enunciated as follows: We have the right to believe that those theological doctrines are true which are necessary for the maintenance of the religion which is necessary for the maintenance of the morality which is necessary for the maintenance of the highest well-being of humanity. The application of this principle is not likely to

be easy. There are two opposite extremes to be avoided: on the one hand, the extreme of conservatism, which would appeal to the general practical benefits associated with a traditional form of religion as a vindication of the truth of its theological doctrines; and on the other hand, the extreme of radicalism, which would treat all theological ideas as mere instruments of practical adjustment, and not to be taken as true in the sense of correctly representing any reality. But while avoiding these extreme interpretations of pragmatism, the critical theological pragmatist would have to undertake four very complex empirical investigations. Most fundamental of all would be the sociological investigation as to what conditions in society make for the highest human well-being. Then there would be the ethical question, as to the principles and rules of conduct that make most effectively for these required sociological conditions. Next there would be the religious question, as to the kind of religious attitude and experience that is most effective in promoting the required morality. And finally, there would be the theological investigation proper, concerned with formulating in a systematic unity the religious ideas necessary for the most effective propagation of the required religion.

Now it is conceivable that this pragmatic principle may be quite true. A high degree of optimism may be necessary, if it is to be steadfastly believed; but it may well be the part of truest wisdom, in case theology cannot be made a science, to act upon this optimistic pragmatic principle. It is the most methodical and consistent form of what we have called the eclectic method.

But the pragmatic theological principle, as we have stated it, is by no means self-evident; and the merely pragmatic method, however critically applied, is far from making theology an empirical science. It can lead to a theology of postulates only, not to one of verified propositions. The religious pragmatist, to be sure, may claim the contrary. Pragmatic theology he defines as what must be believed if a certain religious ideal is to be realized; but essentially the same thing is true, he points out, of all the empirical sciences; they set forth what must be believed if certain purposes generally recognized as valid are

to be achieved. Hence, he claims, pragmatic theology and any recognized empirical science are the one as scientific as the other. Both are essentially normative sciences. Or, in other words, the test of truth in all the empirical sciences is a test of satisfactory working in experience; hence, it is claimed, pragmatic theology, whose test of religious truth is also a test of satisfactory working in experience, is also a science. But the fallacy in this reasoning should be readily detected. It is the undistributed middle term. Put in still a third way the fallacious argument is as follows: pragmatic theology is eclectic in its procedure. But all empirical sciences are eclectic; therefore pragmatic theology is an empirical science. Now it is by no means to be denied that each particular empirical science is organized as that science by the selection and systematic arrangement of material for a certain purpose or certain related purposes; but the point of importance is that it must be already verified scientific material which is thus selected. And so for theology as an empirical science there must first be verified theological material to be selected; then and then only will pragmatic theology be transformed into a science.

It is not with empirical science alone that religious pragmatism agrees in making some sort of working a test of truth. Ordinary common sense also makes use of pragmatic criteria. And religious pragmatism so far has not gone much beyond a sort of ordinary common sense in religious matters. It is not yet fully scientific. At its best it emphasizes the need of being very critical, so as not to take any and every sort or degree of working as a sufficient test of truth; but it is still without the instrument required to transform this critical religious common sense into science. Theology as an empirical science would be at the same time a pragmatic theology, no doubt; but not all pragmatic theology, even when it is carefully critical, amounts to theology as an empirical science.

With all its merits, then, eclectic theology is, in all its forms, too dogmatic to be a science. It assumes not only that something which ought to be *believed* for some particular purpose, therefore ought to *be;* it goes on to assume that this which *ought* to be, therefore *is*. Herein lies its dogmatism. With traditionalistic, rationalistic and mystical theologies, eclectic

theology must take its place as one of the forms—although itself the least objectionable form—of unscientific dogmatism. If we cannot have a scientific theology, then an eclectic theology, constructed on the principles of a critical religious pragmatism, will be, theoretically at least, in spite of its great practical difficulties in application, the best method available. But a scientific theology would be much better.

Systematic theology is not now and never has been an empirical science. And yet this does not mean that it cannot become a science, and that in the very near future. Till the seventeenth century, theology was prevailingly traditionalistic; in the eighteenth century progressive theology was rationalistic; in the nineteenth century it was eclectic. Will theology in the twentieth century become scientific? It will, if religious pragmatism becomes scientific. Critical pragmatism passes over into science when a clear distinction is made between that working which constitutes full verification, and other working which falls somewhere short of it. When this distinction is applied in religious pragmatism, then we shall have alongside of the *novum organum* of inductive logic in general a *novum organum theologicum*, a new instrument for the criticism of religious thought and the discovery of religious truth, which will transform theology from mere religious common sense into an inductive empirical science. This will be the final blow in the warfare against that undue religious dogmatism which still lingers in eclectic as well as in traditionalistic and rationalistic theology.

"If anyone is able to make good the assertion that his theology rests upon valid evidence and sound reasoning, then it appears to me that such theology must take its place as a part of science." These are the words of T. H. Huxley. They constitute a challenge to the theologian, and it is high time for the challenge to be accepted. It is not that the name "science" matters greatly. It is not an "exact science" of which we are thinking. The point to be insisted upon is just this, that it is possible to rest theology upon "valid evidence and sound reasoning." This being done, our ideas of science as well as of theology will be modified.

Theology as an empirical science would be dependent, of

course, upon religious experience; but it is important to distinguish it definitely from the psychology of religion. All religious experience is material for the psychology of religion; it has no criterion for distinguishing between true and false religions; it cannot say the first thing about the existence or nature of God. Theology is related to the psychology of religion much as the physical sciences are related to the psychology of sense-experience. Psychology of religion is simply a department of psychology, and psychology is the science which describes mental activity and experience as such. Empirical theology, like the physical sciences, would be a science descriptive not of experience but of an object known through experience. Psychology describes the activities of the human mind; theology is concerned with the activities of God. The scientific theologian, therefore, will have to select from the manifold of religious experience those elements which give knowledge of God, just as the physicist selects from the multitude of the elements of sense-experience those which are of importance for the understanding of the nature of matter and energy. The theologian must therefore not only have access to religious experience; he must have the proper norms for distinguishing the divine; for as the magnet draws to itself only the particles of steel, so must he distinguish that which has scientific theological value from the total mass which to the psychologist is simply so much interesting human experience.

We must now attempt some further characterization of this proposed theology as an empirical science. The crucial problems for a scientific theology are the following: (1) Is there *religious perception*, or something in the religious realm corresponding to perception, viz., cognition of the divine as revealed within the field of human experience? (2) Is it possible to formulate, on this basis of the data made available in religious experience, *theological laws*, or generalizations as to what the divine Being does on the fulfilment of certain discoverable conditions? (3) Can *theological theory* be constructed in a scientific manner upon the basis of these laws? In our discussion of scientific theological method, however, we shall have to deal with definitions, presuppositions, empirical data, principles, inductive

methods, working hypotheses, laws, the practical application of laws, and theory.

The definitions with which an empirical science begins are very different from those which enter into abstract, deductive sciences. In the abstract or hypothetical sciences the definitions are complete from the beginning and must be held unchanged throughout the whole process of deduction. The definitions in geometry, for example, are of this sort. In the empirical or inductive sciences, however, it is different. These proceed "from the vague whole to the definite whole." They construct their definitions *a posteriori*. The initial definitions are merely formal and provisional; they must be sufficient simply to mark off from all other objects the particular objects to be investigated, and it is the central aim of the science to learn from experience what further content to put within these preliminary formal definitions. Thus chemistry's initial definition of matter, biology's initial definition of life, psychology's initial definition of mind or consciousness and sociology's initial definition of society need only be sufficiently explicit for the identification of the objects to be studied. The definition grows as the science proceeds; detailed knowledge of the object is the end, not the beginning, of the science. And it is not different in empirical theology. Here the most important definition is that of God. The science should begin with some formal definition of God, as the ultimate Object of religious dependence, or the Source of religious deliverance. Then it must proceed to find out from religious experience more particularly just what attributes and relations can be ascribed to that religious Object.

There is also a difference between the abstract sciences and the empirical sciences with regard to their initial assumptions or presuppositions. The abstract sciences may assume not only the axioms, or self-evident truths; they may assume or postulate anything whatever, such as motion without friction, or a fourth dimension of space, and no harm is done so long as the deductions are consistent with the premises, and the conclusions are not confounded with fact, but recognized as hypothetical. In the empirical sciences, however, one must never assume or postulate anything but that of which he already has practical certainty; unless, indeed, he assumes it simply as a working

hypothesis to be tested by experiment and observation. But logically the consideration of working hypotheses belongs more in connection with empirical laws and the methods of induction than among the presuppositions of a science.

Among the presuppositions of empirical theology we may mention first the laws of thought and such assumptions with regard to method and principles as are common to all scientific investigation of an empirical sort. The scientific theologian may also—and not only may, but ought to—presuppose all pertinent and well-established results of the other empirical sciences. Of special importance here will be the history and psychology of religion, including the results of scientific historical and literary criticism of sacred books, and the essential facts about great religious personalities, such as the historic Jesus. Because of the fundamental nature of the question, it will be well to presuppose whatever can be affirmed with respect to human free agency, before undertaking the investigation of the empirical data of theology. Similarly, if, apart from any appeal to religion, anything with regard to a future life can be presupposed, however tentatively, after an examination of the pertinent facts of brain and mind and such phenomena as those of spiritism, such a presupposition ought to be included, because of its bearing upon what may be believed about the consequences of sin and the need of God. It is important that these presuppositions concerning freedom and immortality be limited to that of which we can be practically certain without appeal to religion, and that they be stated as such certainties, rather than that more than this should be affirmed in the form of mere postulates. What we are interested in is not a theology of mere postulates, but a theology of verified truth about reality. Then, too, we ought to be able to presuppose a clear understanding of the nature and consequences of sin, or moral evil in so far as this can be done without any appeal to religion.

But there is one presupposition which is peculiar to empirical theology, just as there is always one presupposition in every empirical science which is the special presupposition of that science. The empirical sciences assume the existence, and the possibility of empirical knowledge, of the objects they undertake to investigate. Thus chemistry assumes the existence of

matter; psychology, the existence of states of consciousness; psychology of religion, the existence of religious experience, and so on. In each case there is assumed, commonly on the basis of pre-scientific experience, the accessibility of the object to further knowledge through further experience. And what is true of the other sciences is true of empirical theology. As in the physical sciences one does not first assume the physical world and then become sure of it, but assumes it because he is already practically sure of it; so it will be normally in empirical theology. The common procedure will not be to assume the existence of God, the religious Object, in a merely provisional way, as a working hypothesis, and afterwards to become for the first time assured of his existence. Such a course, if not impossible, will be at least exceptional. Ordinarily the empirical theologian, it may be expected, will posit the existence of God—defined, to be sure, in preliminary fashion—because he is already practically sure, on the basis of religious experience, that God really exists. If it be objected that this is dogmatic, the reply is that it is dogmatic only as every empirical science is dogmatic; it is not dogmatic in any unscientific sense. On the basis of knowledge of God through religious experience, one can scientifically assume *that* God is, although he may have as yet very little knowledge as to *what* God is. It is just this latter, viz., what God is, that is to be investigated through scientific theological observation and experiment under the guidance of definite working hypotheses.

This matter of empirical assurance of the existence of God is of very fundamental importance, and its full discussion would carry us into the field of religious epistemology (theory of knowledge). But however desirable it may be to have the problem of religious knowledge discussed before taking up the construction of a scientific theology, it is not logically necessary to do so, any more than it is logically necessary to take up for special consideration the problem of knowledge in general before undertaking any scientific investigation of any other objects. There may be, of course, a greater need for religious epistemology than for epistemology in general, because of the greater prevalence of religious scepticism than of scepticism as to knowledge of things in general. But just as there may be much knowledge, and even scientific knowledge, of particular things

without much knowledge about knowledge, so there may be much knowledge of God without much knowledge about this knowledge of God. However, some further treatment of this important point will be offered in connection with the discussion of the empirical data of theology, both in this introduction and in the main body of the book.

It has not been meant, in what has been said of empirical knowledge of God, that in all religious experience there is equal and sufficient practical assurance of God. Some religious experience, operating with faulty hypotheses as to the nature and activity of God, is chiefly negative in its significance; it has value only as showing what God is not and does not do. Now for practical purposes a purely negative theology differs but little from no theology at all; and so, until the theologian has before him religious experience in which there is positive knowledge of God, he would do well, perhaps, to cling to some progressive form of the traditionalistic, or to some eclectic method.

If the question be raised as to whether one without such religious experience as is necessary for adequate assurance of the existence of God, and for further knowledge as to what God is, might not become an empirical theologian in spite of this lack, somewhat as a blind man might be an investigator in the science of optics, the reply is that such a man is, under the circumstances, necessarily dependent upon testimony for his facts. Still, if the facts are correctly supplied to him, while he may not share the practical certainty of the postulate, he may make it hypothetically and develop an empirical theology as a hypothetical science. On the other hand, the right to assume in empirical theology the existence of God can be challenged only on the basis of a thoroughgoing religious agnosticism, such as would deny that there is or can be knowledge of God in any religious experience whatsoever. But such agnosticism would be in the highest degree dogmatic; on the basis of an individual's ignorance of God it would generalize and assume that the ignorance is universal and incurable. Experience shows, however, that ignorance of God is curable. And if a would-be theologian finds himself able to assume the existence of God only as a working hypothesis, still if he faithfully acts upon the hypothesis, either as guided by experts, or in the more round-

about way of trial and error, he may hope to be able ultimately to affirm the existence of God as part of his assured knowledge.

In close connection with this special presupposition of the existence of God, or the divine Reality, the scientific theologian must deal with the empirical data of theology, or the special facts revealed in religious perception, or again, to use the religious term, the instances of "revelation" of the divine within the field of human experience. If theology had to be no more than an abstract, deductive science, with the existence of God as a pure assumption, examination of empirical theological data would be uncalled for. And even where theology is regarded as empirical, but no more than a normative science (or part of a normative science) of human religion, made up of postulates about God as an ideal to be believed in, empirical knowledge of an actual God being impossible—even here comparatively little reference to "empirical data" will be necessary. But if theology is to become a descriptive science on the basis of the reality and experienceableness of God, the empirical data of theology must be carefully collected and collated for scientific treatment.

The proper selection of the empirical data of theology presupposes sufficient progress in religious discrimination to be able to distinguish the distinctively divine elements within human experience, the qualities or events which are to be regarded as more immediate products of the divine activity. The intuition involved in religious perception is, in a sense, "prophetic," but it is not incapable of further elucidation or analysis. Religious perception is a special case of perception in a complex. There are many realities which we perceive, not as detached or detachable elements of experience, like colors, sounds, and the like, but only in and through a complex of elements. Within a certain complex of sense-qualities we perceive the presence of a certain physical object. Within certain changing complexes, too, we can perceive activities, the life of bodies, and even consciousness and the self. That is, we are aware, by a sort of empirical intuition, of the presence of these realities, though not as isolable elements of the manifold of sense or inner feeling. Similarly in the experience of spiritual uplift through religious dependence there is intuitive perception, or awareness of the presence and activity, within experience, of a Power that makes

for a certain type of result in response to the right religious adjustment. This specially divine Factor within experience is selected from the objects of experience in general by means of religious apperception. We recognize the divineness of the activity, because its quality is what, as we have learned, is characteristic of the religious Object. We have learned this in and through the religious experiences of ourselves and others, through testimony, observation and experiment. The religious apperception itself may be analyzed into an appreciative apperception and a substantial-causal, or realistic apperception. Commonly too there is in religion what Wundt calls a "personifying apperception"; but this is perhaps more properly regarded as interpretation, and dealt with under theory. Appreciation of genuine religious value, (i. e., divineness, or true holiness) is, however, an important factor in the recognition of the presence of the divine Reality. This is the true essence of the somewhat confused Ritschlian doctrine of religious value-judgments. But the realistic apperception, or cognition of the religious Object as a real Being, causally active within the field of religious experience, is also an essential factor in religious cognition and religious common sense. There is no more reason, from the point of view of religious experience, to adopt an agnostic or subjectivist interpretation of the Object of religious experience, than there is, from the point of view of sense-experience, to adopt an agnostic or subjectivist interpretation of the objects of sense-perception. No better reason can be given for reducing theology to the psychology of religion than can be given for reducing physics and chemistry to the psychology of sense-experience. And as we cannot maintain the physical life without acting on the assumption that our realistic intuition as to physical objects is essentially true, so neither can we maintain the religious life without acting on the assumption that our realistic religious intuition with reference to the divine is essentially true.

The empirical data of theology, then, are the contents of religious perception, or, in religious phraseology, the facts of "revelation." Not all that presents itself as revelation is to be taken as such; there must be a critical evaluation of all revelation-claims. Just what the true criteria of revelation, or of the

divine within the human, are, we shall not undertake to say in this introduction. That will be dealt with in our discussion of the empirical data in the body of the book, where we shall have to consider not only the idea of revelation in general, but also, more specifically, revelation in the personal life and activity of the historic Jesus and in the Christian religious experience. Here, then, the Bible, critically interpreted, will be restored to a place of central importance, because of the deep religious experiences which it records. But it ought to be readily evident that the adoption of an objectively scientific method in theology will mean that religions other than the Christian are virtually invited to supply such data as their experiences afford, as material for theological science. Genuine empirical values will be fairly dealt with; scientific method will guarantee that. Nor should the Christian object to such a procedure, as he might with good reason to a merely eclectic syncretism of the beliefs or theories of other religions with those of his own. Conceivably there may be no important data for theology in other faiths but such as are duplicated or transcended in Christianity at its best; but if this is so, the scientific method will reveal the fact, and in any case the method of inviting other religions to contribute, not primarily their theories and inherited beliefs, but their empirical data, points to the only safe and sane religious syncretism.

But not all that has been experienced in historic religion is truly divine or really holy; that is, not all has positive religious value in the sense of furnishing a basis for assertions as to the nature of God. The distinction between that in religious experience which can and that which cannot be taken as revelation of the presence and activity of God has long been recognized. It is common to prophets, apostles, mystics, theologians, pastors, missionaries and evangelists. In Old Testament times prophets were classified as true or false according as their religious inspirations were objectively validated or not. In New Testament times the greatest apostle insisted that God was not the author of confusion, even when it came in connection with religious experience, and that inspirations should be tested, to prove whether or not they were from God. "Not every impulse is divine," says one of the greatest of the

mystics, criticizing certain phases of religious experience. But probably no one has even yet more definitely set himself the task of discerning the marks of divine activity in the midst of the total of revivalistic and other religious experiences than Jonathan Edwards in his "Treatise Concerning Religious Affections." With great acumen and with considerable success in spite of the doctrinal limitations under which he labored, he has undertaken to show "what are no certain signs that religious affections are gracious, or that they are not," and "what are the distinguishing signs of truly gracious and holy affections." Thus from the larger total of data for the psychology of religion he was virtually sifting out as best he could the data of empirical theology. And indeed the modern empirical theologian might do much worse than begin with this treatise of the great New England theologian, revising his list of criteria of the divine within the religious and making a more extended application of the same fundamental distinction. Finally, it may be remarked that when, recently, a questionnaire was sent to a large number of ministers, missionaries and other religious workers, asking as its first question, "What experiences and what qualities of life do you regard as in a special sense marks of the divine work in human life?" the results not only confirmed the belief that religious experts recognize and are familiar with the problem, but showed also a high degree of agreement in the answers they gave to the question.

But scientific knowledge is not satisfied with mere individual description, mere data of particular experience; it seeks laws, generalizations. Now in the case of the natural sciences there is one fundamental principle upon which all generalization rests; it is, for the investigation of nature, the ground of all induction. Considered as an hypothesis, it is the first of all to be acted upon, and while it must in the nature of the case be the last to be completely verified, it is the one to which the scientist, like the man of common sense, must cling to the very end. This general controlling principle is what Mill called the Principle of the Uniformity of Nature; more recently certain aspects of it have been formulated as the Law or Principle of the Conservation of Energy; but what is meant essentially is

the dependableness of nature. If the scientist is to generalize he must depend upon the future to be like the past, so long as conditions are the same. Corresponding to this principle of the dependableness of nature in the natural sciences, there must be at the basis of any empirically scientific theology the principle of the dependableness of God. This dependableness, in a way parallel with the dependableness of nature, should not be interpreted, we may remark in passing, as precluding the possibility of the personality of the religious Object. Character is the basis of dependableness in personality, and the more mature and perfect the character, the more dependable the person. Nor, again, does this fundamental principle of empirical theology, that there is a dependable Object of experimental religion, mean that God can be depended upon to do whatever man may desire; it means that God may be depended upon to act consistently, so that man may learn through observation and experiment what God does under different conditions. This is the most fundamental hypothesis of theological science; it must, of course, remain the last to be completely verified; but it is the one to which the scientific theologian, like the practical religious man, must adhere from the very beginning to the very end.

Scientific method in the discovery and proof of theological laws may take any one of two or three courses. These courses are theoretically fairly distinct from each other, but in practice they merge into each other. First among these courses we may mention *the way down*—from ideas to facts. Here the procedure is from principles, theories, hypotheses, tentative generalizations or laws, to verification, partial or complete, or refutation, as the case may be, in the light of empirical facts. In this connection it may be noted that just as, in the words of Mill, "scientific induction must be grounded on previous spontaneous inductions," so in inductive theology it is well to use, as sources of suggestion of working hypotheses, not only the fundamental principle of the dependableness of the religious Object, but also tentative or even pre-scientific theories as to the nature and character of God, and pre-scientific spontaneous inductions as to the nature of the divine processes or activity. For example, the ideas of the holiness, love and omnipotence of

God readily suggest certain practical and experiential results, which might conceivably follow, if man were to relate himself in a certain way toward God. The adoption of such suggestions as working hypotheses in experimental religion makes it possible to apply the pragmatic test to traditional and speculative conceptions of God; but it does more than this. It opens up a possible way to scientific discovery and proof in the realm of theology. From traditional or speculative and tentative ideas suggested by the scientific theological imagination, together with the above-mentioned fundamental principle of dependableness, there may be deduced certain major or more general hypotheses, from which in turn may be deduced other more specific, minor or derivative hypotheses. Ultimately in this way minor hypotheses will be reached which are capable of being either refuted or completely verified in single crucial experiments, where acting upon the hypothesis leads to an experience in which there is an immediate awareness either of the unreality or of the reality of what was supposed in the hypotheses. Now refutation of a minor hypothesis involves refutation of the major hypothesis from which it was logically deduced, and so on back to the general theory concerned. This elimination of inexact inductions and untenable theories will mean progress toward the goal of a scientific theology; it means much to learn what we must *not* believe. But it must be noted that verification of a minor hypothesis does not logically involve *complete* verification of the major hypothesis and general theory from which it may have been logically deduced. To assume that it did would be to fall into the fallacy of "affirming the consequent." However, the verification of a minor hypothesis means scientific progress; it leads in the direction of the complete or adequate verification of the major hypotheses and general theory from which it has been deduced.

A second course which may be pursued by empirical theology, as by other sciences, is what we may call *the way up*—from particular empirical facts to more and more general laws and theory. The procedure, is so far as it is deliberate, rather than intuitive and spontaneous, will be in the main along the lines of Mill's "methods of experimental inquiry." Stated in somewhat condensed form the canons of these methods are as follows: (1)

Method of Agreement: A circumstance (of presence or absence) in which alone all instances of the phenomenon to be explained agree is casually related to it. (2) *Method of Difference:* The circumstance in which alone two instances of the phenomenon differ is causally related to it. (3) *Joint Method of Agreement and Difference:* If two or more instances of the presence of the phenomenon have only one other circumstance in common, while two or more instances of the absence of the phenomenon have in common only the absence of that circumstance, that circumstance is casually related to the phenomenon. (4) *Method of Concomitant Variations:* Whatever phenomenon varies in any manner when another phenomenon varies in the same manner, is casually related to that other phenomenon. (5) *Method of Residues:* Subtract from any phenomenon such part as is already known to be the effect of certain antecedents; then the residue of the phenomenon is (perhaps) the effect of the remaining antecedents. (This last is the least conclusive of the methods, but it has often proved a fruitful source of discovery.)

Now, superficially considered, the value of these methods applied in connection with religious experience, may seem to be simply for the psychology of religion, and not for theology. But it may prove possible to find, by the use of some of these methods, some phenomenon of religious experience which has as its "unconditional, invariable antecedent" a certain sort of religious attitude of mind. This would, of course, enable the psychologist of religion to formulate a law of religious experience. But in view of the fact that the religious attitude of mind which conditions the experience necessarily posits the existence of the religious Object, it would be possible to formulate the law not only in subjective terms, or psychologically, but in objective or realistic terms also, i. e., theologically. The generalization would then state what, in the way of religious experience, the religious Object can be depended upon for, on condition of a certain described type of religious attitude on the part of the human subject. Moreover, such theological laws would be quite on a par, scientifically, with the physical laws which state what processes physical objects can be depended upon to pass through when man adjusts himself to them in certain described

ways. The purely psychological way of formulating the information is no more the only way in the case of religious experience than in the case of sense-experience. The question is not one between the empirical theologian and the psychologist of religion (as J. H. Leuba, for instance, seems to think); it is a philosophical question—the question between the subjective idealist and the realist.

The distinction is an important one, and, while its full discussion would carry us far into the field of the philosophy of knowledge, some further attention must be given it here. It is well to recognize from the first, however, that the course we are here recommending as the scientific procedure for theology is essentially continuous with the course of thought followed by religious common sense. When a number of persons in a testimony-meeting recount the stories of their religious conversion, dwelling upon the essential *agreement* among themselves in the sort of *difference* that took place in their spiritual experience when they "came to God," and interpret the change as due to the gracious operation of the Divine Spirit, they are making a religious, and so an essentially *theological* use of the best of all inductive methods, the Joint Method of Agreement and Difference. Similarly in common religious life and thought there is, with reference to the varying progress in experience of what is interpreted as the uplifting and steadying power of God, according as the prayer-life and religious attitude are kept up to normal, there is a theological use of the Method of Concomitant Variations. Thus once more we are reminded that in theology, as well as in the more general field of investigation, "scientific induction must be grounded upon previous spontaneous inductions."

The realistic religious position here assumed, as being as essential to a scientific theology as it is to experimental religion, will be questioned. Exception will be taken to its explanation of religious phenomena as in any instances or to any extent caused by God, instead of in terms of antecedent phenomena exclusively. In anticipation of this objection it may be suggested that, apart altogether from theology, the prevailing concept of cause sorely needs revision. A definition of cause in terms of antecedent or accompanying *phenomena* simply, as in

the influential definition of J. S. Mill, is simply what cause *would be*, if phenomenalism (Mill's philosophy) were true. If we experience and can know nothing but appearances, phenomena, then the only "causes" we can intelligently talk about are antecedent or accompanying phenomena. But these are not real *causes*—active, productive agents or agencies—at all. When we exchange phenomenalistic or subjectively idealistic ways of thinking for realistic, the inductive methods, very much as Mill formulated them, are still available; but they must be interpreted as leading in the first instance only to antecedent conditions instead of to real originating causes. The unconditional invariable antecedent "condition," however, is a halfway house on the road toward the real agents or agencies (suns, planets, satellites, electrons, atoms, molecules, sub-personal vital and psychical entities, human persons, communities, God). If cause be not so interpreted, but as mere antecedent phenomenon of some sort, there can really be no science but psychology and no psychology of the person, but only of a succession of "conscious states." Now the religious individual is *one* of the ultimate causes of his own religious experience; he is a determining factor in the religious attitude which conditions the responding activity of God. But the Church is also a cause of the individual's religious attitude and experience. Still, as has been pointed out already, the religious attitude is an attitude toward an objective cause, other than one's self and other than the Church. The case is comparable to that of the beginner in chemistry, the results of whose experiments are not caused *immediately* by his instructor and previous chemists, nor *simply* by himself, but also and essentially by the reagents with which he deals. A still closer analogy exists between the case of the experimental religionist and the experimental biologist or physiologist, for the divine activity in religious experience resembles more that of living substance than that of "inert" matter.

And so we claim that the psychologist of religion has no right, as *scientist*, to object to the idea of a scientific empirical theology. Its legitimacy can be legitimately questioned only from the standpoint of philosophy—the philosophy of knowledge. Flournoy, Leuba and other psychologists of religion are correct enough when they insist that the psychology of religion has the

right to deal with all religious experiences and all phenomenal aspects of such experiences. But this is something which empirical theology is not concerned to dispute. Even experience of the objects of the physical sciences has its psychologically describable aspects, as we have admitted; and the same thing, no more and no less, is true of the Object of religious experience and theological science. Leuba seems to think that the empirical theologian makes use of the Method of Residues to find a place for theology in those aspects of religious experience which are regarded as beyond the limits of psychological description; and this he objects to, as violating the Principle of Parsimony, according to which explanatory principles (causal agencies) are not to be multiplied beyond the minimum number necessary to explain the phenomena. Now it may be remarked that the Principle of Parsimony needs to be supplemented by the counter-principle of pragmatism or common sense, according to which what has commended itself to experience and practice is not to be rejected without sufficient reason. Each of these principles is a corrective for the other. But still more to the point is it to refer to the fact that empirical theology—at least as we have defined it, whatever may be true of the forms criticized by Leuba—is not dependent upon the Method of Residues in its procedure. Where the Method of Difference can be applied, the Method of Residues is not required; and in theology, as we have seen, we can not only apply the Method of Difference, but, better still, the Joint Method of Agreement and Difference. To find a place for an empirical theology we do not need to look for some small corner of religious experience where psychology breaks down, any more than the physicist, in order to find a place for his science, needs to look for some break-down in the psychology of sense-experience. It is not psychology, but *psychologism*, a subjective idealism in philosophy, which is inimical to objective or realistic science. We are in a position to view with entire complacency the overlapping in large measure of empirical theology and the psychology of religion.

One other variety of empirical procedure may be briefly mentioned, viz., *the way up and down*, or the inductive-deductive method. This is employed sometimes in order to arrive at

more complex laws on the basis of simpler results of induction. As Mill points out, the method involves three steps: first, ascertaining the simpler laws by direct induction; second, calculating from these laws of the simpler processes what should be expected to result from their combination; and third, appeal to experience for verification of the conclusion deduced. This method might be employed in theology in deriving laws of more composite experiences from those of experiences which may be more elemental.

We are now in a position to make some general statements about empirical theological laws. As the laws of the physical, mental and social sciences are general or universal statements as to what matter or physical energy, or living substance, or mind, whether of individuals or social groups, can be depended upon for, under certain conditions, so whatever discoverable laws of empirical theology there may be will be general or universal statements of what in human experience God can be depended upon for, under certain conditions. As laws of the divine response to the right religious adjustment, they will include, although no longer in their traditionalistic form, the bulk of what the religious speak of as the "promises" of God. Indeed, the scientific theologian ought to be able to restore in its essentials the predictive element to its central place in prophecy; on the basis of the laws of empirical theology he ought to be able to guide individuals to the religious adjustment that conditions the most desirable religious experience, and to predict, within limits, the results of the right adjustment. This is no more than has been commonly assumed by religious evangelists and teachers; with scientific knowledge of the laws of the divine operation in the lives of men, however, the prediction can be made with more accuracy and justified assurance. Just what the right religious adjustment is in its general characteristics and in its special forms, must be learned, as a fundamental part of all theological law, through observation and sincere and reverent experiment. The following questions from a questionnaire addressed to ministers, evangelists, missionaries and other expert religious workers, may be suggestive: How do you seek the results which you regard as the work of God in the human spirit, in yourself and in others? What attitude of mind and

will, toward God and in general, do you seek to produce? What ideas do you regard as essential, in guiding to this attitude? What ideas, further, are useful? To what extent is it well to work through feeling (emotion) for religious results, and how would you do this? What is the place of active expression in leading to deepened religious experience? What forms of expression are most helpful? What social religious conditions—in the religious community, and in the religious meeting—are most favorable to genuine religious results?

The laws of empirical theology, as generalizations from the religious point of view with regard to successful religious dependence, may be expected to be fundamentally volitional. The most elemental of these will be essentially laws of the answer to prayer. Experience will show that the indispensable element in prevailing prayer is not a matter of mere words or formal petition, nor of the name or national mythology associated with the deity, whether Jewish, Grecian, Mohammedan, Hindu or Christian. It is the character of the religious adjustment that is all-important, and this will be influenced by the belief as to the character and power of the religious Object. Moreover, experience may also be expected to show whether or not it is scientifically possible to formulate a law of the answer to prayer for such external things as changes in the weather, or good fortune in war or in business, or some specific change in the spiritual lives of other persons, apart from any question of the human use of means toward that end; or whether, on the contrary, the generalizations, to be scientific, must be limited in the first instance to an impartation of the divine power in and through the will and spiritual life of the one who prays. But besides the theological laws of these elemental volitional experiences, the empirical theologian may expect to be able to formulate the laws of composite volitional experiences, such as are designated in the language of traditional religion "regeneration," "perseverance," "the fulness of the Spirit," "sanctification," and—to sum up all—"salvation." And in addition to the laws of such volitional experiences, elemental and composite, it may be that the formulation in theological form, of the laws of certain emotional, intellectual, physiological and even sociological aspects of religious experience will turn out to be a possibility.

In any case, all laws of theology as a descriptive science will be knowledge of religious experience in relation to its conditions and central cause, the conditions here being largely subjective, human, while the central Cause is not only objective, but divine.

These laws of scientific theology will naturally be of the utmost importance in evangelism and religious education. It is desirable that ministers and all other religious workers become scientific teachers and trainers in the religious life. If this is to be realized they must learn how to promote the divine life and revelation in man; and to know this they must have scientific knowledge of what God will do in human life, and on what conditions. For, after all, it is theology that one makes use of, centrally in religious training, rather than psychology. If one goes immediately from the psychology of religion to evangelism and religious education, without having attained to a scientific theology, he is likely to imagine that certain psychological devices of suggestion and the like are as important as a correct adjustment of a distinctly religious sort, and the whole process will tend to be degraded to an irreligious level. Nor will it do to have recourse to speculative philosophy simply, in order to supplement the psychology of religion with positive religious ideas. Speculative philosophy is no proper substitute for scientific information in any other practical undertaking, and it does not appear why it should be in religious education. Evangelism and religious education can ultimately succeed only if they become in essence an applied science, and that not an applied psychology of religion principally, but centrally and most essentially an applied empirical theology.

But the laws of the empirical sciences are commonly as important for theory as for practice; we get scientific knowledge of what objects are, by observing how they act. In the light of the facts, scientifically organized into a body of descriptive laws, the scientific imagination tends to construct its theory of what the object must *be* (beyond what is immediately perceived) in order to account for what the object *does*. Moreover, a theory, to be scientifically satisfactory, must be one from which there can be deduced hypotheses which can be acted upon and verified in experience. It is not otherwise in the case of scientific theology. Scientific knowledge of what God is, it will be

possible to gain from scientific knowledge of what God does, and this the scientific theologian will possess in the form of theological laws. Thus the formal definition of God with which we started will gain definite content. We shall learn what God's character and power must be, in order to account for what experience shows he can be depended upon to produce in the life of man, when the human adjustment to God is made what it ought to be.

But there are other ways of effecting the transition from the laws of empirical theology to theological theory, besides this way of deliberately constructing a theory to account for the facts embodied in the laws. One may begin with the religious intuitions of experimental religion in what seems to be its best pre-scientific form. These intuitions, e. g., as to the sufficiency of God in greatness and goodness for man's religious need, may be criticized by being subjected in a scientific way to the test of religious experience. A distinction will begin to appear between what the plain man of profound religious experience really knows, and what he only thinks he knows. In so far as his views stand the test of experience and scientific criticism, they may be allowed to remain as elements of a theological theory. Moreover, this method will mean the discovery of an ultimate and universally valid basis of appeal in mediating between the various religions of the world, with their more or less mythological theologies. Only the scientific method of testing inherited religious beliefs can be trusted to separate the gold of genuine religious truth from the dross of untenable dogma.

Moreover, in still another way the transition to theory may be made. Postulating the view of God which seems practically necessary, this view may be taken as a general and comprehensive working-hypothesis, to be refuted in the refutation of the minor hypotheses deduced from it by strictly logical processes, or being progressively verified in and through the verification of these deductions. As a matter of fact, all three methods of making the transition may be employed together, as is often done in other sciences.

In this scientific way it will be possible to build up a theological theory, covering such points as the moral and metaphysical attributes of God, the relation of God to individual

men, to the events of human history, and to the realm of nature. It will then be possible, on the basis of this view of God and of the divine relations, to draw inferences with reference to the future of human individuals and of the human race.

Theology as a *bona fide* empirical science—this, if it proves practicable, will eventually be the one and only "New Theology," destined to displace all rivals for the honor of that title. To the undogmatic experience-religion of the present, it will be, with the help of modern science and the principles of induction, what the theology of Thomas Aquinas was to the external-authority religion of the middle ages with the aid of the Aristotelian logic and philosophy.

Finally, when through the employment of empirical methods there will have grown up a well-defined body of theological laws and a resultant well-established theological theory, the greatest possible contribution will have been made toward solving the ultimate problems of metaphysics. To be sure, the submission of the theoretical part of a scientific theology to the fire of metaphysical criticism will constitute its last intellectual test. But its relation to metaphysics will be parallel with that of the other sciences, except that it will be of much greater philosophical importance than most of them. Metaphysics will be on trial as truly as theology itself; it must become a synthesis of the well-established results of the descriptive sciences, an empirical theology included. And thus theology will probably make a much more important contribution to metaphysics than will metaphysics to theology. It has been pretty generally conceded that to take, as suggested, the results of the special sciences and combine them all in a final theory of reality would be the most obvious and theoretically unobjectionable metaphysical method. But all such syntheses hitherto have proved religiously unsatisfactory, as might have been foreseen from the fact that there was no scientific religious knowledge to be combined with the other sciences. Whenever, on the other hand, a religiously satisfactory philosophy was constructed, it was found open to the charge of being subjectively conditioned and unscientific. If now there can be developed a scientific theology, it would appear possible for philosophy to be strictly objective and essentially scientific,

and at the same time do full justice to the legitimate demands of the religious life. And indeed, may not this perhaps be the real reason why philosophy (or, more particularly, metaphysics) has so often retraced her steps and made so little progress—that she has been waiting, without realizing it, for theology to become an empirical science? When once this has been accomplished, the way will have been opened, for the first time in the history of thought, for the making of philosophy at the same time adequately spiritual in its appreciations and adequately scientific in its method.

PART I.

THE PRESUPPOSITIONS OF THEOLOGY

CHAPTER I

The Presuppositions of All Empirical Sciences

In undertaking to set forth the necessary and legitimate presuppositions of theology as an empirical science, we naturally begin with those epistemological, logical and methodological presuppositions which our special science shares with all other descriptive sciences.

A tacit presupposition of all empirical science, and one which is justifiable in epistemology, or the philosophy of knowledge, is that through experience and reflection according to the principles of induction and deduction upon the experienced content, knowledge of reality in general is possible. Now inductive procedure rests upon a general postulate or principle which has been called the "uniformity of nature," but which would be expressed more accurately as the dependableness of the universe. And yet it would be easy to become too dogmatic at this point. Not only must we not assume that only those events are to be accepted as authentic happenings which are completely explicable according to laws already known. At the outset it is not even to be assumed as self-evident or in any way fully established that, if we had sufficient knowledge, all actual events would be seen to be nothing more than special instances of happening according to an already familiar or a newly discovered uniformity, or general law. The question as to whether or not uniformity, or law, is absolutely all-pervading is of fundamental importance in connection with such topics as freedom and miracle, and its final consideration is an affair of metaphysics. We may assume, however, the justice and validity of the scientific attitude and procedure, according to which the investigator first endeavors to explain by means of known laws all that is to be accepted as fact—since "the true scientific method is to explain the past by the present" (Bagehot)—and then, if there should be a residue of well-

established fact not thus explicable, tries to discover new laws under which the particular occurrence would fall as a special instance. If an alleged event is not explicable in either way, and is not supported by indubitable experience or any absolutely binding imperative, its authenticity must be regarded as highly questionable, to say the least. This is in accord with the attitude we should insist upon as justified in investigating the probable truth of the events recorded in the sacred writings of other faiths than ours, and we ought to be ready to apply the same scientific procedure in dealing with the traditions embodied in the scriptures of that religion which may happen to be our own.

CHAPTER II

The Pertinent Results of Other Sciences

It is a recognized part of the procedure of each of the special sciences that the well-established results of other sciences may be presupposed as required. The same is true of theology as an empirical science.

Scientific discoveries which are especially pertinent to theology are the following: the immensity of the physical universe; the motion of the earth, and in general the heliocentric nature of the solar system; cosmic evolution, with the certain prospect that the earth will, at some remote future time, become so cold as to be unfitted to be the habitation of physical life; the great antiquity of the earth and of plant and animal (including human) life upon it; the conservation, at least within the limits of possible human measurement, of mass and energy; the molecular, atomic and ultimately electrical nature of matter; biological evolution, i. e., the descent of all species of plant and animal life, whether now extinct or still extant, by natural generation from one or a few primitive forms of living matter, along lines determined largely but perhaps not entirely by natural and germinal selection; the psychophysical nature of man, with the presence of law in the psychical realm as well as in the physical; the biological function and survival-value of the more primitive manifestations of the psychical, together with the presence of natural, evolutionary processes in the development of the moral and religious as well as the intellectual and æsthetic consciousness; and finally, the evolution of society and of the social consciousness of the individual.

Of particular importance are the results being reached in the science (history and psychology) of religion. Some of these will be utilized in the course of our theological construction, especially in connection with our discussion of the data and laws of theology. But reference should be made at this point to certain

conclusions within the field of the scientific history of religion, or more explicitly, to the results of the scientific historical and literary criticism of sacred books. And here interest will be centered in the resultant view, presumably historically sound, as to the personality and career of Jesus of Nazareth. On this particular topic, however, the critics have not yet reached complete agreement. Even if we eliminate the prejudices of extreme conservatism and the vagaries of extreme radicalism, there seems to remain the possibility of a considerable divergence of not unreasonable opinion as to what the historic Jesus really was and thought and said and did.

There is a large measure of agreement among careful critics, however, as to the sources upon which chief reliance must be placed, if we are to arrive at trustworthy historical results with regard to the reputed founder of the Christian religion. These are the genuine letters of Paul, the bulk of the Gospel according to Mark (editorial additions having been eliminated), and the material commonly denominated "Q" (*Quelle*), consisting largely of the passages common to Matthew and Luke and not found in Mark. On the basis of these and similar critical views, and guided by the above-mentioned principle of scientific methodology (according to which the investigator should first try to explain all that is to be accepted as fact by referring to known laws of nature or of mind, and, failing that, should search for some new law, in the light of which he can understand such alleged occurrences as he still believes, on grounds of critically examined evidence, that he ought to accept as fact), what results concerning the historic Jesus may be presupposed by the empirical theologian?

To begin at the beginning, what should theology presuppose with reference to the "virgin birth of Christ"? Later theological theory has attached much importance to this alleged event, as establishing the divine nature of the Christ, but it is rather remarkable that we find no allusion to it either in the Pauline or the Johannine literature, in Mark or the "Q" material of Matthew and Luke, or indeed anywhere in the New Testament save in the material of obscure origin, at the beginning of Matthew and Luke. Nor do we find any reference to it in extra-canonical literature until some time after the synoptic

gospels had received practically their present form. Moreover, in other parts of the synoptic gospels we find Joseph and Mary spoken of by the evangelist as "his parents," Mary represented as speaking of Joseph to Jesus as "thy father," and the people as asking, "Is not this Joseph's son?" while no negative answer is in any way suggested by the evangelist. Then, too, the genealogies in Matthew and Luke, incompatible with each other as they seem to be, both trace the ancestry of Jesus back through the Davidic line, and each claims to be the genealogy, not of Mary, but of Joseph. The parenthetical clause, "as was supposed," in Luke 3:23, where Jesus is spoken of as being the son of Joseph, is evidently a later addition, for there would have been no point to be gained by introducing a genealogy which was not that of Jesus. Especially important is the fact that in the well-known Sinaitic Syriac manuscript, translated from an early Greek original, which apparently, for obvious reasons, was not allowed to remain extant, the sixteenth verse of the first chapter of Matthew reads, "And Jacob begat Joseph; and Joseph, to whom was betrothed Mary, the virgin, begat Jesus who is called Christ."

In view, then, of these various strands of damaging evidence, and since apart from this story there is no basis for supposing that human parthenogenesis is even possible, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that the virgin-birth story is a legend, comparable with the similar, although more crudely expressed birth-legends that grew up about certain Greek and Roman heroes, and such religious personalities as Gautama (the Buddha), Krishna and Shankara. In the case of Jesus the growth of the legend may have been facilitated by the common early Christian practice of searching the Jewish scriptures for passages which might seem to admit of a Messianic interpretation, and applying these to Jesus. The prediction made by Isaiah to King Ahaz (Isa. 7:14), that a virgin (the Hebrew word means simply a young woman) should bear a son and call his name Immanuel, obviously referred to an event expected within the lifetime of the king, since it was to be "a sign" to him; but the interpretation of the passage in a Messianic sense would lend distinct support to the natural tendency to account for the fitness of Jesus to be the long-expected Messiah by ascribing to

him a supernatural origin. In view then of the fact that there is no scientific knowledge of parthenogenesis, even under special conditions, higher up in the animal kingdom than the sea-urchin and the frog, we seem warranted in assuming the improbability of the virgin-birth of Jesus, or of any other religious leader.

If we follow a similar course in dealing with the other miracle-stories of the gospels, we shall find it possible to account for them in a fairly plausible way without having to depart from laws which are already known or are in process of being discovered and formulated. That is, following the critical procedure characteristic of science and good common sense, we shall find it possible either to relate the event, viewed as an historic fact, to laws of nature or of mind, or to explain the story of the event, viewed as more or less legendary, in accordance with well-known laws of individual and social mind.

Thus, to begin with, the imperfectly understood but well-authenticated present-day phenomena of mental healing make it comparatively easy to accept as essentially accurate the stories of the cure of ailments of a fundamentally nervous character, such as mental derangement, paralysis, epilepsy, "infirmity," and certain cases of (probably nervous) blindness, deafness and dumbness or stuttering (all of which functional disorders were interpreted as due to demon-possession). Possibly the same should be said of the instances of hemorrhage, withered hand, "dropsy" (neurotic œdema?) and "leprosy" (if not the real leprosy, but the more evanescent malady of similar appearance). (Compare the record of Paul's works of healing in what seems to be the document of an eye-witness, Acts 28:8, 9.) That the healings were according to law is suggested by the admission that where scepticism prevailed instead of faith, Jesus could accomplish little in the way of cure.

An interesting instance of what looks like a legendary accretion to the original non-miraculous narrative is Luke's story of the restoring of the ear cut off by Peter; the earlier Mark, like Matthew, in recording the disciple's exploit, has nothing to say of any such healing. Possibly in other cases also we ought to accept this hypothesis of a gradual addition of legendary details to the story of what was originally simply a remarkable but natural event; for example, the feeding of the four or the

five thousand, the stilling of the tempest, the walking on the water, the coin in the fish's mouth, the withered fig-tree, and possibly the healing of the ten lepers at once. (The more radical critics, however, would dismiss all such stories as purely mythical, and having no foundation in fact.) The story of the resurrection of the saints at the time of the crucifixion is pretty generally recognized as being a clear case of legendary embellishment.

Certain other events which were evidently regarded as miraculous by the narrator may be taken almost as they are described and interpreted as quite natural occurrences. Examples are the drowning of the swine, the great draught of fishes, and the restoration of Jairus' daughter from her trance (Jesus is recorded to have said she was not dead). If accepted as authentic, the case of the widow's son at Nain may be similarly explained. Other instances in the same group are the falling back of the soldiers sent to arrest Jesus, and perhaps the darkness at the time of the crucifixion. (A sidelight on these narratives is to be found in the eye-witness's story of Paul's experience with the serpent, interpreted as miraculous by the barbarians of Melita, Acts 28:3–6; cf. also Acts 14:8–19.) In the same class also would come the instances of extraordinary psychical experience, such as the mystical experiences at the baptism and the transfiguration, unless, as some think, these experiences have been read back into the Gospel narratives on dogmatic grounds, in view of the prevalence of similar experiences in the primitive church. Under the same category we might put the instances of remarkable insight, including the prediction of such events as the betrayal, Peter's denial, the crucifixion and the resurrection; also the answering of opponents' unspoken objections. (Compare the interpretation of Caiaphas' rather commonplace remark about one man dying for the nation, as being a miraculous prediction, Jn. 11:49–51.)

In some instances several alternative explanations are suggested. For example, the recovery of the centurion's servant *may* have been a mere chance coincidence; or, without going so far as to regard the whole story as purely mythical, one might hold that the exactness of the agreement as to the time of the servant's improvement has been exaggerated; or again, short of

appeal to the supernatural one might raise questions as to a law of telepathy or clairvoyance. Something similar may be said of the case of the Syrophœnician woman's daughter, only that here there is the difference that the cure is not reported.

Yet another class of the stories in question is to be found in the accounts which may possibly have had their origin in the transformation of metaphorical teaching or parables, in the course of oral tradition, into stories of miracle. Here one might include the story of the cursing of the fig-tree, as derived from the parable of the barren fig-tree, and the generalized statements as to healing the blind, deaf, lame and leprous, derived from Jesus' possibly metaphorical description of the effects of the preaching of the gospel in his message to John the Baptist. (Compare his announcement of his program in the synagogue at Nazareth.)

Finally, some narratives, especially those found in the fourth gospel, represent the miracle as being performed in order to establish the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship and to divinity. Such are the accounts of the changing of water into wine, the reading of the Samaritan woman's past history, the healing of the man born blind, and the resurrection of Lazarus. But in view of the tradition preserved in the synoptics, to the effect that Jesus refused to give a sign to prove any claims, but was actuated simply by compassion in his works of healing, and keeping in mind the fact that the fourth gospel is very late as compared with the other three, the thoroughly historical character of these stories, improbable enough on internal grounds, is rendered still more doubtful.

One other miracle-story, that of the resurrection of Jesus, we reserve for discussion in connection with the subject of immortality.

Many will doubtless feel that this way of dealing with the miracles of the Gospel story raises about as many questions as it solves. If the records are to be taken as critically as the conclusions just drawn would seem to imply, what basis have we for any positive opinion as to the sort of person Jesus was, or as to his ideas, purposes and achievements? We would suggest the following procedure. Having adopted such an attitude as we think the unbiassed scientific historian might justly demand,

let us first pursue a radical course and eliminate from the narrative and teaching all that we can reasonably interpret as having been read back into the records by virtue of the dogmatic presuppositions of the original writers or later editors. Then let us take the conservative course, giving the records the benefit of the doubt as far as we can consistently with the scientific principles we have adopted. And finally, let us compare results by the two methods and see what conclusions are common to both.

The radical method emphasizes the extent to which the New Testament idealizes the person of Jesus. This does not necessarily mean that it represents him as having been more truly ideal than he actually was, but that the writers, as representative early Christians, all had their ideas and ideals as to what the Christ or Messiah must be; and when they accepted Jesus as the Messiah, they tended to form their opinions as to his person and work from their Messianic preconceptions and beliefs, rather than from a careful investigation of the facts.

In seeking to separate the nucleus of practically indubitable fact from the overgrowth of Messianic idealization we shall not make much use of the fourth gospel. Its discussions reflect the situation confronting the Christian church two or three generations after the lifetime of Jesus. The writer, evidently undertaking to prove that the historic Jesus of the synoptic gospels and the eternal Christ of the Pauline epistles are one and the same, is helped toward this end by the Stoic doctrine of the eternal Logos, or divine Reason, the immanent "Light which lighteth every man." This Logos is declared to have become incarnate in the historic Jesus. And so, in the settled belief that the Logos-Christ indwells the Christian church as the Spirit of Truth, the writer of the gospel feels warranted in expressing his own mystical Christian convictions as the teaching of the historic Jesus.* Despite its great religious value, therefore, the fourth gospel cannot be regarded as of primary value as a source of historical information.

But even in our earliest sources, viz., Paul, the original (or Petrine) element in Mark, and "Q," it is not difficult, it may be maintained, to discover evidences of an idealizing process.

* See E. F. Scott, "The Fourth Gospel."

According to Paul the earthly life of Jesus was the incarnation of a pre-existent heavenly Being, the well beloved Son of God, who humbled himself to become man, the suffering Servant of the Lord foreshadowed in the law and the prophets. Because of his faithfulness even unto death, God raised him from the dead and made him the exalted Messiah, through whom he should grant forgiveness to the repentant and believing, and an entrance into the glorious Messianic kingdom. And so throughout Paul's writings we find, instead of a recounting of the details of the earthly career of Jesus, an exposition of the qualities and functions of the suffering Servant of the Lord.

In Mark we find that Jesus is thought of as having been the Messiah not simply from the time of his resurrection and exaltation, but throughout his earthly ministry as well, having been adopted as such by the Father at the baptism. The interest in Mark's account consequently centers in the picture of the strong Son of God, clothed with Messianic authority and power over men and nature, over angels and demons.

In the "Q" material of Matthew and Luke, in keeping apparently with the notion that Jesus was virtually Messiah, not simply from the time of his baptism, but from the time of his birth we find him pictured as the one in whom dwelt the spirit of Divine Wisdom, whose teachings were a revelation of the mind and will of God. (See Mt. 23:34; Lu. 11:49.)

And so, with reference to the synoptic gospels, although they are ostensibly a record of what Jesus said and did, the question arises as to whether they are not in the main on the one hand a compilation of more or less legendary traditions, selected because they agreed with the ideal of the strong Son of God doing his work with full Messianic authority and power, and on the other hand a compilation of the accumulated wisdom of the Jews, ascribed to Jesus under the supposition that this must have been his teaching, since he was the incarnation and mouthpiece of the Divine Wisdom.

But whatever may be our opinion as to the truth of Paul's particular dogmas, or as to the historicity of particular events narrated in Mark, or as to the authenticity of particular sayings recorded in "Q," one thing is clear. As Professor Bacon has pointed out ("Christianity Old and New"), these three pictures

of Jesus as the suffering Servant of the Lord, the strong Son of God clothed with authority and power, and the one in whom dwelt the spirit of heavenly Wisdom, distinct and independent of each other, as they are, and yet not incompatible with each other, must each be essentially correct. Otherwise they would not have been accepted as true by a generation many of whom had known Jesus during the period of his public ministry.

From this radical point of view, however, since even the writer of the original Petrine core of the Gospel of Mark was obviously interested in accentuating the Messianic consciousness and functions of Jesus, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the presence of this Messianic element in the narrative from the beginning of the public ministry may be due to its having been read into the traditional records as an interpretation based upon dogmatic considerations. Following out this suggestion, then, the mystical experience at the baptism, with the voice from heaven, like the similar experience of the three disciples at the transfiguration, would be eliminated as unhistorical. Both would be explained as the product of the writer's reasoning that since such experiences were characteristic of the early Christian communities and of Paul himself, and since they were, according to the accepted interpretation, caused in the Church by the indwelling Spirit of the risen and exalted Jesus as Messiah, they must surely have had a place in the experience of Jesus himself, and if so, at what time more appropriately than at the very outset of the public ministry? Similarly the story of the temptation in the wilderness would be regarded simply as a picturesque presentation of the considerations which the writer supposed must have occupied the mind of Jesus in view of his consciousness of Messianic mission. So, too, of the idea that during practically the whole of his public ministry Jesus took pains to hide his Messiahship from the people, forbidding demons to make him known, enjoining on those healed the maintenance of strict secrecy, not revealing his true dignity even to the disciples at first, and then adopting the method of teaching publicly in parables, whose true Messianic import he afterwards disclosed to his little circle of sympathetic but very obtuse disciples. All this the more radical critic would discredit as being obviously an interpretative

device, framed—albeit in good faith—to explain the actual silence of Jesus on the subject of his Messiahship until the time of his trial in Jerusalem. Even Peter's confession of faith at Cæsarea Philippi would be eliminated, leaving only Jesus' question, Whom do men say that I am? together with the disciples' reply, as credibly historical. On similar grounds the assertion of Messianic authority in forgiving sins committed against God is reduced to a mere assertion of God's forgiveness of the repentant sinner, or else eliminated altogether. The healing of the sick on the Sabbath day is held to have been defended, not by asserting that as Messiah he is lord of the Sabbath, but by enunciating the universal principle that the Sabbath is to be used in whatever way will be most conducive to human well-being, so that man is to be regarded as lord of the Sabbath. But on the other hand, even this anti-legalistic attitude on the part of Jesus, which is made so prominent in the Synoptics, would be interpreted, from the point of view under consideration, as having been exaggerated or overaccentuated under the influence of the Wisdom literature and of the anti-legalism of Paul. However, as if by way of compensation, the highly legalistic utterance about the jot and tittle in Matthew 5:17–20, would also be explained away in large part, as expressing ideals which were probably not so much those of Jesus as they were those of the Jewish Christian editor of the material that makes up the Matthean Gospel.

This more radical principle of criticism would not necessarily lead, however, to the total elimination of the Messianic idea from the self-consciousness of Jesus. Since it would not be easy to account for the crucifixion on the supposition that Jesus made no Messianic claims, it is admitted that during his final visit to Jerusalem he probably did make some such assertion as the records ascribe to him. This is explained as follows: Jesus, a Galilean artisan of simple unaffected faith in God and devotion to his will and to the welfare of men, came before the public under a sense of a divine mission to champion the cause of the common people against the oppression of the religious aristocracy, calling to repentance and proclaiming a gospel of liberty, equality and fraternity in the Kingdom of God. He failed, however, to secure any very intelligent or whole-hearted

response on the part of the masses, earning instead only the suspicion and hostility of the religious leaders of his people. Then, it may be, as he came face to face with that apparent failure of his divinely-appointed mission which was the burden upon his mind and heart in Gethsemane and even on the cross, the Messianic ideas and the apocalyptic hopes of his people assumed new meaning for him. Might it not be that God would intervene to save from failure this enterprise for his righteous kingdom? Might it not be that God would yet bring triumph out of apparent defeat, and even though the enemies of Jesus should compass his crucifixion, might not God be trusted to vindicate the righteousness of his cause, and perhaps even send him back to be his Messiah and representative on earth? Perhaps something of this, some forecast of his crucifixion, some declaration of faith in the triumph of his cause through the power of God, was communicated to the disciples during his last talks with them (although neither so early in his ministry nor so often as the gospels assert); perhaps, too, something of this confidence was uttered at his trial before the Jewish authorities. At any rate he was crowned with thorns and crucified in derision of what was interpreted as his claim to be King of the Jews; and after he was dead, so strong was the impression his personality had made on those who had known him best, that they could eagerly seize upon whatever encouraged the faith that though he had died, he was alive forevermore and had indeed become the Messiah, as he had suggested during those last tragic days, and that he would return to judge his enemies and establish his kingdom of righteousness throughout the world.

But alongside of this more radical view of the character, consciousness and career of Jesus, we would suggest consideration of a more conservative view, which seems tenable without any abandonment of strictly scientific presuppositions and a critical attitude toward the literary sources of our information. What is suggested is simply that we recognize how inconclusive are the considerations on the basis of which certain recorded events and teachings are ruled out by the more radical, as having been read back into the history on dogmatic grounds. Then we may ask what would result if we were to give the records in more generous measure the benefit of the doubt as to whether many

elements that have been plausibly explained as later interpretations may not still be, in spite of all, truly historical. For it is true that much that *may* be, so far as we know, untrue, may also be, so far as we know, quite true. Pursuing this more conservative (but equally critical) course, we should reach some such results as the following:

The one glimpse we are given of the personality of Jesus before the beginning of his public ministry, viz., at the threshold of his adolescence, shows him to have been, even at that early period, deeply moral and religious, as well as keenly intellectual. As he grew to manhood he felt, it would seem, a divine call to minister to his fellow-men; but, his father having died, it was not until his younger brothers were able to take his place in the support of the family that he felt free to give up his trade and leave his parental home. When finally he did go forth, there was only one contemporary party with which he could wholeheartedly affiliate himself. The Pharisees advocated a system of pleasing God and securing the substantial benefits of the expected Messianic kingdom by means especially of an extremely punctilious observance of the details of the ceremonial law and the traditions of the elders, while as a class they ignored the most obvious principles of social righteousness. The Sadducees were worldly and irreligious self-seeking politicians. The Zealots, or Nationalists, appealed to violence and rebellion as preliminary to the setting up of an earthly Messianic kingdom in Jerusalem. Even the Essenes, notwithstanding their moral idealism and religious zeal, were hopelessly unsocial and committed to a life-program that was wholly unpractical, so far as the masses of the people were concerned. But there was one contemporary movement which, in its essentials, Jesus could endorse, viz., that headed by John the Baptist, who called upon all to repent of their sins and amend their lives as the indispensable preparation for participation in the expected kingdom of God. Accordingly Jesus went to John and was baptized by him in Jordan as an act of identification of himself with John's propaganda and of dedication of himself to the task of going out as a shepherd to find and bring back to the fold "the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

The baptism of Jesus was accompanied by a very distinct

religious experience. There was a deep consciousness of the reality and presence of the Father, together with a renewed sense of mission, coupled now more definitely with the thought of doing work of a Messianic nature in connection with the Kingdom of God. Possibly too there was a profound mystical experience—unless the form in which we have the story is due to the narrator having read back into the event the normative mystical experience of the early Christian communities. In any case the thought of his discharging a Messianic function of some sort in connection with the coming Kingdom of God—a thought which had probably occurred to him before, only to be suppressed—now broke through the inhibiting forces and came to him as the voice of God summoning him to be a Messiah to the people.

But this new experience precipitated in the mind of Jesus a new and insistent problem, and he retired to the wilds of Judea to reflect upon it. If he was to be a Messiah to his people, what sort of a Messiah should he be? Indeed there was a temptation to him in the thought, not dissimilar in kind, though on an immeasureably higher level than that which came to Macbeth when he was told, "Thou shalt be king hereafter!" There was the danger lest he should be unduly concerned to win a following by trying to meet the popular expectations of the Messiah, instead of simply seeking to win the people to God and to righteousness, leaving it to God to make him Messiah, or to the people to recognize him as such. As it would be presumptuous to suppose that because he was called to be a Messiah to Israel, God would miraculously provide for his needs or preserve him from danger and death, so it would be presumptuous to expect God to crown with true success any attempt to shorten the road to influence with the people through compromise with their mistaken notions of the Kingdom of God, even though the motive underlying such compromise might be thoroughly unselfish. His decision accordingly was that he would simply devote himself to the promotion of the principles of the Kingdom of God. He would not begin by announcing himself as the Messiah, but would let the people become acquainted with his ideals and purposes; then, if they recognized him as Messiah, well and good. It would be at his own ethical and religious definition of

the Messianic function, not at their present crude materialistic definition. Under such circumstances recognition as Messiah could only enhance his power for good. And so he went forth, befriending the outcast, criticizing the professional religionists, preaching to all the necessity of repentance and a turning to righteousness as the condition of divine forgiveness and as a preparation for participation in the Kingdom of God. Conscious of the power of God available for man through faith, he went about doing good, ministering to the needs of body, mind and spirit. This program of ministration to the needs of men he announced in the home-synagogue at Nazareth, as well as elsewhere.

But throughout the early period of the public ministry there was a growing tendency on the part of the people, encouraged by his personality and teachings, and especially by his remarkable works of healing, to think of him as possibly the Messiah, and that very largely in terms of the current materialistic notions of the Messianic Kingdom. "The people were in expectation," we are told; and even with reference to John the Baptist, although he "did no miracle," the question had been raised as to whether he might not be the Messiah. Even the insane raved about the Messiah, and some of them hailed Jesus as the promised son of David. (Compare the experience of Paul and Silas with the damsel "possessed with a spirit of divination" at Philippi, Acts 16:16–18.) But any such unintelligent acceptance of him as Messiah could only be a hindrance to the real work of the Messianic Kingdom to which Jesus had been called, and so he consistently discouraged all outbursts of this sort.

Moreover there was another factor that was becoming a growing hindrance to his work, viz., the increasing opposition of the Scribes and Pharisees. He soon clashed with them over the petty rules of their legalistic system, in connection with such matters as the Sabbath, ceremonial washings and fasting; and the suspicion and hostility of these religious leaders was all the more accentuated by their knowledge of the popular tendency to acclaim the great new teacher and healer as the long-awaited Messiah. Indeed Jesus came to think of their hatred, which was daily becoming more murderous, as more than likely, in view of the total situation, to accomplish its deadly purpose. He began

therefore to concentrate his attention more particularly upon the training of a select group of his followers, that they might be able to continue his work without him, if he should be taken from them. In one of his talks with these disciples, one of them expressed the conviction that Jesus was the Messiah. This appreciation and intuitive insight on the part of one of the inner circle of his friends, who had begun to understand in some measure what he was really aiming to accomplish, was highly gratifying and encouraging; it was an approach to being recognized as Messiah in the only sense in which he could be Messiah. But there was still much for the disciples to learn; and so Jesus felt justified in revealing to them his forebodings as to his own fate, and at the same time his unshaken confidence in God and in his own divinely-appointed mission.

Finally Jesus resolved upon an open appeal to the people, assembled as they would be in Jerusalem at the feast of the Passover. The nature of his message and mission, it might be supposed, ought by this time to be fairly well known; and if the people chose to acclaim him as their spiritual leader, he would accept the position and challenge the blind leaders of the blind who had misguided them too long already. He would not compromise with them, even to save his life and to win at least the appearance of success.

The result, at least for the time being and as far as appearances went, was a dismal failure. The first day the masses of the people, including hosts of pilgrims to the feast, their imaginations stirred by the spectacle of the famous Galilean teacher and wonder-worker riding into the Holy City seated on an ass's colt, as the prophet had predicted of the Messiah, were wildly enthusiastic. But no apocalyptic wonder ensued; nothing was done save the clearing of the temple-area, that the people might have opportunity to worship. And so the populace, characteristically fickle, unintelligent and clinging to their materialistic religious ideals, felt bitterly disappointed and not a little resentful.

Now was the opportunity of Jesus' enemies. Working through the office-holding and socially conservative (though theologically liberal) Sadducees, who had probably lost expected profits through the clearing out of the traders from the

temple-area; working also through a disaffected disciple, whose selfish ambition had been disappointed by the course events had taken; also through the easily misguided and excitable mob which thronged the city streets *; through the Roman governor, who desired both to conciliate the influential Jews and to nip in the bud any incipient revolution; and finally, through the brutalized professional soldiery, who executed the governor's commands, the Scribes and Pharisees succeeded in securing the arrest of the trouble-maker and in having imposed upon him the extreme penalty of the law against traitors and the worst of criminals.†

And throughout this bitter experience the heaviest burden upon the heart of Jesus was his disappointment in his apparently almost total failure to win his people to God and the way of righteousness, a failure which he had now to face more fully than at any time before. He had gathered his little band of disciples about him at his last supper with them, and had acted out a parable with them pledging them to united loyalty to himself and his cause, the Kingdom of God; but even they had now forsaken him and fled in the hour of danger; one of them had betrayed him, and the boldest of them all had denied with an oath that he knew anything about him. This apparent failure of his enterprise for God and man was what made the cup he drank in Gethsemane so bitter, and no doubt it was what led him to utter that tragic cry on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But through faith he was enabled to gain victory in this last great struggle, and to say, before the end came, "Thy will be done; my work is finished; into Thy hands I commend my spirit."

Then the little band of disciples, smitten with grief and remorse, and at first despairing, finally became (through a process which we shall examine more fully in another connection) more firmly convinced than ever that he who had been the in-

* Perhaps, however, the populace remained more favorable to Jesus than is commonly supposed. The arrest took place at night, when the people were sleeping, and the noisy mob, clamoring for the spectacle of the Galilean's crucifixion,—hired, perhaps, to do so,—may not have been truly representative of the majority of the people in Jerusalem at the time.

† See Rauschenbusch: "A Theology for the Social Gospel," pp. 248–258.

spiration of their lives was all that they had ever believed him or that he had ever claimed to be.

We have thus sketched in outline two views of the historic Jesus, either of which seems tenable within the limits of critical methods of investigation. But the more conservative view, while perhaps equally tenable theoretically, will seem to many to be preferable on practical grounds, for the twofold reason that it enables us to regard as authentic a much larger portion of the traditional Gospel story, and that it avoids the anticlimax of the other view, according to which Jesus, in the dismay of his final experience, lapsed into a fundamentally mistaken view of his own person and mission. In either case, however, we are left with practically the same sort of picture of the personality and character of Jesus, and practically the same conclusions as to his spiritual outlook and life-purpose and as to his religious experience and service to the world. The difference is almost exclusively one as to his relation to the Messianic scheme of thought.*

* It will be noted that we have eliminated, as not fairly tenable, the view that Jesus' thought of himself and the Kingdom of God was of the most pronounced apocalyptic and eschatological sort. Nor can we go to the opposite extreme, and say that he gave no place whatever to this series of thoughts in his belief. Moreover, it is with a high degree of assurance that we are able to assert the essential historicity of Jesus. We are probably entitled to be quite as sure that Jesus existed and as to what he was, as we are to make the corresponding assertions about Socrates or the Buddha.

CHAPTER III

Human Free Agency

Man is a free agent. This, we would claim, is a legitimate presupposition of theology. To establish this, we must deal with the topic of human freedom under three heads: its significance, its theoretical possibility and its moral certainty.

What is meant by saying that man is a free agent is not that in any given situation he is free to perform any act whatsoever, provided only that he has sufficient physical energy for it. Neither does it mean that in every instance in which he has acted he has been *as free* to pursue an alternative course. If he is free, it is within limits, psychical as well as physical. His freedom is not "liberty of indifference"; it does not mean that there can be conscious action toward which no determining influence at all has been exerted by character or by any considerations which may be occupying the attention at the moment. Conduct, which tends to determine character thereafter, is also a more or less complete expression of character, and ordinarily of character previously achieved. This is the only rational basis of praise or blame, of reward or punishment.

But, on the other hand, what is meant by the assertion of human freedom is not simply that one is free to express his character in his action, or to act out the idea that may be occupying his attention. Unless one might have done somewhat differently, he deserves neither praise nor blame for his action. Neither is it enough to say that man may *become* "free," in that he may begin to act out adequate ideas and valid ideals, instead of being in bondage to evil impulses and inadequate ideas. This is to becloud the issue by speaking of morality (*right* action) as if it were synonymous and exactly coincident with *free* action.

What is meant by the assertion of freedom or free agency is that the agent is not necessarily at the mercy, absolutely, of

what *was* his character at the moment immediately preceding the moment of his activity. It may be granted that, other circumstances being the same, the action tends to be swayed in this direction or in that, according to the motive, that is, by the idea of a chosen possible future. It may be granted further that an idea of a possible future becomes the motive by being simply held long enough and with sufficient concentration of mind in the focus of attention. But the question of freedom, as William James has pointed out, is the question as to whether, in any given situation, the subject might have given more or less attention to the idea than he did give as a matter of fact.

In other words, the free act, if there is any, is not completely *pre*determined, even by character and ideas, in addition to heredity and environment. The act may have been determined *to some extent* (i. e., influenced) by hereditary and environing factors. It may have been determined *largely* by previous character and by the ideas present in the mind. If this were not so, no praise or blame, no attempted education or discipline, would be rationally defensible. But if the degree and duration of attention given to an idea are not necessarily absolutely and completely predetermined, there is ample room for moral freedom. The giving or withholding of further attention then becomes a creative act, determining *at the time* both the action itself and, to some extent, not simply the *resultant* character but the character of which the act is the expression. This would mean that to a certain extent the character of the moment of action might be at variance with and transcend the character of the immediately preceding moment, and this by virtue of an unpredetermined effort of attention, which, within certain limits, creatively determines conduct and character together.

The question of freedom is not exactly the question as to the theoretical predictability of conduct. The possibility of complete prediction would involve a denial of any real creative freedom; but the impossibility of predicting it, even given complete knowledge of antecedent conditions, would not necessarily mean freedom in the sense in which we have used the term. For an event might be unique and its product something absolutely novel, so as to be, humanly speaking at any rate, unpredictable; and yet it might conceivably have been

made inevitable by antecedent conditions. What we mean by freedom involves some measure of not completely predetermined determination.

Now freedom, in the sense just defined, is theoretically possible. It is legitimate and perhaps even necessary to hold that change, becoming, is an ultimate fact. It is not to be reduced to a mere succession of different static conditions at different instants of time; there is a *changing* * between any two different "states," or cross-sections of a process, however close together in time the two may be. The flying arrow is never *at rest* in any of the different locations which it occupies at successive instants of its flight; it is always *going*. And so it may be with human conduct and character. There will always be a correspondence between the action of any moment and the character of the same moment. The character will be the inside of the conduct—and more. The conduct will be the outside of the character, or of some phase of it. But the conduct and character of any given moment are not necessarily in every case the inevitable outcome of the character of the immediately previous moment. One of the instances of change as an ultimate fact may very well be the change in which, in spite of a large measure of continuity in the character of successive moments, the acting subject transcends (or falls below) its past self, and produces by and in the creative act itself, and not as its mere after-effect, a certain appreciable difference of character. Thus, along with the continuity of character which psychology is interested in tracing through successive moments in the life of the individual, there may very well be difference enough to admit of a genuine creative freedom.

And this human freedom of action, real and creative, however limited in scope, is not only theoretically possible; it is morally certain. The consciousness of freedom is involved in the normal human consciousness of moral responsibility. "I ought," said Kant, "therefore I can." We are immediately aware of moral obligation. We may come to doubt our former judgments as to what our duty was; but we cannot rid ourselves of the consciousness that we have *some* duty. There is *some* "ought" which is binding upon us. But logically we should

* Compare H. Bergson: "La perception du changement."

have to deny the validity of this consciousness of moral obligation, if we could not believe in freedom in the sense in which we have here defined it.

For let us suppose all the factors which enter into each and every human action—environment, predispositions, character, thought and other psychical content—to be absolutely and completely predetermined. This would mean that the action was made inevitable by factors which were themselves made inevitable by previous events, and so on in the regress to earlier determining conditions and causes, until it could be said that everything the individual ever did or could do had been absolutely predetermined, made inevitable, by events which had taken place before he began his conscious life at all. This would mean that man ought not to be regarded as having in reality any responsibility whatsoever for any event which may have taken place within his life. He himself has not been the real doer of the deed; he has simply been in the presence of the event, an observer suffering from the delusion of supposing that he is, in some measure at least, its responsible originator. But it is neither morally right nor psychologically possible thus to repudiate all moral responsibility for all our actions. Wherefore we are entitled, on the ground of an inescapable consciousness of moral obligation, not only to postulate as morally imperative, but to presuppose, as involved in what is intuitively certain, a genuine and creative human freedom.

CHAPTER IV

The Possibility of Immortality

Some justification may be required for the inclusion of an assertion about immortality among the *presuppositions* of theology. If, it may be asked, any assured knowledge on the subject is obtainable at all, must it not be by deduction from a well-established empirical knowledge of the nature of God? This may be; but there is a reason for introducing some discussion of the subject at this point. In our treatment of the empirical data of theology (to which we must turn after our statement of its presuppositions) some definite position with reference to the consequences of moral evil will have to be presupposed; and this topic in turn, if it is to be at all adequately treated, necessarily presupposes some definite position with reference to the question of a life after death. We may not find ourselves able to *presuppose* immortality with certainty; but if we can establish the thesis that a future life is possible, or at any rate that its impossibility has not been established, and that belief in it is morally imperative and not unreasonable, it will be legitimate enough to presuppose the possibility of a future life, not in order to base upon it as yet any final conclusions, but simply that we may have in mind, as nearly as may be, essentially all that may possibly be involved in religious experience.

But more fundamental than the question as to whether it is reasonable to believe in the possibility of a future life is the question as to whether or not such a life is desirable. Some people, apparently, do not desire it, and among these are included some of the worst and some of the best—or second best. The suggested prospect of living again some persons find unattractive, because the present life has not been lived in such a way as to promise to be a good foundation for a satisfactory experience in the next; others, because the ideas and imagery

they have learned to associate with the thought of a future life do not appeal to their deepest interests.

But even if not always desired, an extension of conscious existence beyond physical death might still be desirable. If an individual were given the option of immortality or annihilation, it might be his duty to choose the former, even if he felt inclined to choose the latter.

The desire for an individual future existence is sometimes spoken of as "petty selfishness" (G. B. Shaw); but this is true only where the future life is desired for unduly selfish purposes. When the missionary-physician whose life has been one of considerable privation and hardship, endured in ministering to the general well-being of a people living in the inhospitable climate of a bleak and barren northern seacoast, has this to say, "I am very much in love with life. I want all I can get of it. I want more of it after the incident called death, if there is any to be had," the desire expressed is neither petty nor selfish; it is a moral desire for a continuation of the sort of thing life has meant to him, viz., opportunity for unselfish service.

Moreover, the values of moral personality are absolute; they are not measurable in terms of material or any non-moral values. A morally good will, with life and opportunity for action indefinitely prolonged, would be an instrument of an incalculable sum of good, besides being all the while an absolute value or end in itself. No one, it would seem, could *morally* annihilate such a will, supposing it were possible. Nor can any one morally consent to the final cessation of any morally good will, his own or that of any one else. Indeed, one can morally consent to the physical death of a person of morally good will, only on the understanding that that individual will, as an absolute good and an instrument of incalculable good, is to be continued in existence and activity after death.* It seems to have been only on this condition that Jesus of Nazareth could consent to die.

But we may go further and say that even in the case of a will that is not morally good, if there is reasonable ground for the hope that after further experience and discipline it will

* The author acknowledges indebtedness to a not yet published paper by G. A. Coe, entitled "The Will to Die."

become good, no one can morally consent to its annihilation. No one, indeed, would be justified in refusing immortality if it were offered him, except perhaps one who felt absolutely sure that he would do more harm than good by continuing to exist. But anyone who could refuse a future life on such grounds would thereby show his moral right to have it, for a will so considerate of the well-being of others would surely do more good than harm. To completely express all that is potential in a morally good will, or all the good that is potential in a will that is capable of becoming morally good, is then an absolute and unconditional imperative, the force of which must ever be upon the side of the further extension of personal life.

And the converse of all this is that to view human individuals as essentially immortal means to enhance indefinitely their worth and significance. It means that under no circumstances is it rational or right to treat any human being as if he were a mere animal. When death is believed to end all, there is not only a psychological tendency, but a logical reason also to regard the individual as of less value than he would be if immortal, and to act accordingly.

Such considerations as these furnish the basis for what is probably the most effective critique of the idea of a merely conditional immortality. When it is asserted that there are persons whose existence is not worth being made immortal, there is either a failure to appreciate the absolute value of a moral will, or else a failure to grasp the possibilities of moral development under education and discipline. As William James suggests, the fact that *we* have no use for these persons is no proof that they may not be very interesting to one who more fully knows them. Nor is it any proof, we may add, that they may not become of incalculable actual value, as they are now of incalculable potential value.

On these grounds one might postulate immortality as not only desirable, but imperative. However, it is not our purpose to construct a theology of mere postulates, no matter how imperative they may be. Our objective is theology as an empirical science; hence our presuppositions must be in the form of what *is*, not of what merely ought to be. But this may mean, as already intimated, that we must not presuppose

immortality, but only the possibility of immortality, or, more exactly, that the idea of immortality is to be taken seriously, as a "live hypothesis."

To be sure, we could include among the presuppositions of our empirical theology the assertion of immortality as a fact, if we could depend upon any of the "demonstrations" offered by speculative philosophy. But all such "demonstrations" fail to demonstrate, from the classical argument that the soul is simple, therefore indivisible, therefore indestructible, to the recent argument of Royce, that the individual, as the only one of a type, requires unending time for its adequate definition, and so presumably also for the expression and experience in time of all that it really is, from the supertemporal point of view; or to the argument of McTaggart, that persons, as fundamental differentiations of the Absolute (interpreted as a Community of persons), are necessarily as eternal as Absolute Reality itself. All such "proofs" are either fundamentally dogmatic in begging the question, or else there is equivocation in the course of the argument, or a *non sequitur* at the end. If there is to be any *proof* of immortality, or even of a future life, it must be empirical, not merely speculative.

When we turn to look for empirical proof, we find three conceivable methods. First, the personal experience of continuing to exist consciously after the death of the material body would obviously be adequate empirical proof; but in the nature of the case this is not an available method in the present life. Second, there would be the method of receiving an adequately authenticated communication from some one who is having the experience of living after physical death; and third, the method of finding an empirical proof of the existence of a Being who may be depended upon to guarantee a future existence to persons, who are, as such, capable of unending moral development. This last is the course which we intend to take in our empirical theology; but for that very reason it cannot at this point be *presupposed.* Let us return, then, to a consideration of the second method.

The great difficulty in all cases of alleged communications from discarnate spirits is in eliminating all other possible explanations of the phenomena. Even after we have eliminated

cases of possible fraud and made due allowance for chance coincidences, there remain, at least for the explanation of most instances of the phenomenon, some plausible alternative hypotheses. It is possible to appeal to the idea of obscure and not fully understood psychical or neural processes on the part of the medium. And if this hypothesis should prove inadequate to the fact, it would still be possible to advance the theory (as yet somewhat dubious, perhaps) of a telepathic communication from the mind of some living person who possesses, consciously or "subconsciously," the information imparted. And beyond this again appeal might be made to the still more dubious hypothesis of a telepathic message sent before death, but received only subconsciously, and later rising to consciousness, or being read off telepathically by the medium. These explanations may seem highly artificial and far-fetched, as compared with the simple hypothesis of genuine spirit-communications, which the phenomena ostensibly are; but it is a fair question whether, until at least one instance of spirit-communication has been indubitably established, the scientific "principle of parsimony" does not require us to give the benefit of the doubt to one of these alternative explanations, rather than to that of *bona fide, post-morten* communication.

This leads us to consider in connection with the idea of an empirical argument for a future life, the one instance of alleged spirit-communication which many conservative minds are willing to accept as genuine, viz., the appearances and messages ascribed in the New Testament to the "risen Christ." It should be recognized, however, that in this instance the recorded phenomena are, psychologically speaking, essentially similar to those of modern spiritism and psychical research. Ecclesiastical tradition of long standing, and especially the great worth of the personality of Jesus and of the spiritual outlook associated with the "resurrection," impart to this instance a dignity and impressiveness which even the most convincing modern instances of the phenomenon largely lack; but in the end both may be expected to stand or fall together. To establish either would tend to establish the other; to discredit either is partially to discredit the other.

In taking up this historical form of the empirical argument

for immortality we must not overlook the fact that interpretation of the alleged appearances and communications as veridical and consequently as an argument for human survival of bodily death, is supported more or less by two associated elements in the tradition, viz., the story of the empty tomb, and the record, which there seems no good reason for disbelieving, that Jesus before his crucifixion, and his disciples after that event, achieved on a religious basis as assured belief in an immortal life. This religiously grounded conviction of Jesus and his disciples we shall have occasion to refer to in our later theological construction, but the tradition of the empty tomb demands some comment in the present connection. In the first place there is great difficulty encountered in the attempt to harmonize the various stories of the finding of the empty tomb. It seems not unreasonable to suppose that in the course of the years before our records were written there accrued to the original account of what happened a certain legendary element. But the theory that Jesus revived in the tomb and was kept in hiding by Joseph of Arimathea presents too many psychological difficulties to be plausible. Moreover, we are scarcely in a position to disprove that it was believed by the primitive Christian community that the tomb in which Jesus had been buried was left mysteriously empty, or that the enemies of the little band of disciples had no other way of meeting the obvious challenge to produce the body of Jesus than by making a charge of fraud against the disciples themselves. This charge, however, it seems unreasonable even to entertain seriously, in view of the apostles' manifest sincerity and enthusiasm, even to the point of martyrdom. It is noteworthy, nevertheless, that Paul makes no use whatever of the story of the empty tomb; indeed his argument for the "resurrection" seems to preclude any such appeal. Moreover, the difficulties in the way of accepting the ordinary traditional notion of the "resurrection" of Jesus, as a reanimation of the dead body, its miraculous transformation and final ascension to "heaven," are, to the scientific habit of thought, practically insuperable. What became of the atoms of carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and other elements which composed the earthly body of Jesus? What are we to think of a visible "ascension into heaven," in view of the fact that according to our

Copernican astronomy the particular place to which he could ascend would depend upon the time of day at which the ascension took place? If, however, we first try to explain events and records according to the laws of nature and mind, we find it by no means inconceivable that the disciples may have been (as Kirsopp Lake suggests) mistaken as to the tomb in which Jesus was buried, even if we accept the tradition about Joseph of Arimathea, instead of supposing (with A. Loisy) that the body was simply thrown into the common pit reserved for malefactors. In fact we do not know in detail what became of the body of Jesus; but an undischarged burden of proof still rests upon those who maintain that it did not suffer disintegration, like the bodies of all others who have died.

With reference to the alleged appearances of Jesus to his disciples, it seems unnecessary to deny that some such experiences took place, although there is no close correspondence between the appearances to which Paul refers and those recorded in the gospels. But, granted the historicity of these experiences, in attempting to interpret them we encounter the same difficulty as in the case of the phenomena of modern spiritism. Was there a genuine objective communication? Perhaps so; but the critical historian would be inclined to explain at least some of the not readily reconcilable accounts as purely legendary, while the conservative psychologist would, undoubtedly, favor the hypothesis of collective hallucination under the influence of suggestion, similar to what often occurs under hypnotic conditions, the original hallucination (possibly that of Peter) having been the explosive expression of a peculiarly insistent repressed desire. This interpretation is strengthened by the fact of Paul's experience of the "risen Christ," which was probably similar to that of Peter and to those of many mystics since the days of the apostles. It may be plausibly contended, therefore, that the subconscious repressed but protesting faith of the disciples in Jesus caused the experiences, and that the experiences in turn confirmed the faith and made it easy to acknowledge it openly.

It would seem, then, that, apart from each individual's experience of a future life (if there is one) when the time comes, and apart also from the appeal to religious experience, the em-

pirical argument for immortality, however impressive it may seem to some, still falls considerably short of complete demonstration. This simply means, however, that in undertaking an empirical theology we are not able to *presuppose* a future life as fully established. But the strong practical considerations already noted in favor of belief in the continued existence of the human person justify our taking the idea seriously, particularly as no disproof, either *apriori* or empirical, is forthcoming. What some affect to regard as amounting to an empirical disproof, viz., the well known facts of physiological psychology, amount to nothing of the kind. That mind is the mere product of the developing nervous system is pure assumption. It is quite as defensible an interpretation of the psycho-physiological facts to regard the brain and nervous system as the developing instrument of the developing mind—a view which is not precluded by the obvious fact that the mind has important services to render to the body. The instrumental function which the brain has is its bringing of the mind into such relations with a particular material environment as will enable it to learn therefrom, express itself therein, and communicate with other "embodied" minds similarly related to the same environment. And there is strong support for this view in certain special considerations, some of which may be briefly mentioned. For example, if we accept as valid the normal human consciousness of human freedom, we must hold that, within whatever limits, man is a free agent; for if he were not free at all, he would not be morally responsible. But if he is free, this must mean, as we have seen, that his mental or spiritual self is an originating and even creative factor in certain changes which take place, first of all in the brain, and ultimately, through the nerves and muscles, in the external world. If the mind is independent enough to create changes in the brain, is it unreasonable to suppose it may be independent enough to survive the dissolution of the brain? And if it be true, as many scientifically trained special investigators maintain, that the hypothesis of telepathy is the necessary alternative explanation of certain instances of alleged communications from discarnate spirits, this is important in the present connection. For telepathy itself would mean such a view of mind as would make it seem not unreasonable to sup-

pose that it might very well be able to persist without the brain as its instrument.

So then, it must be held that the continuation of the life of the spirit after the death of the body is theoretically possible. That is, we know of no consideration which can disprove or even seriously discredit the belief; consequently, in view of the importance of the subject, and in anticipation of its further discussion under theological theory, we would suggest that an empirical theology has the right tentatively to assume as a possibility the indefinite or even endless continuation of the conscious existence of the human individual, after and in spite of the inevitable dissolution of the body.

CHAPTER V

The Fact of Sin, with its Evil Consequences

Among the presuppositions of empirical theology we must also include the fact of evil, for the reason that, as we shall find, the empirical data for theology afforded by experimental religion are largely centered about the experience of "salvation," i. e., of deliverance from evil, and more particularly from what is taken to be the supreme evil. Moreover, in the higher developments of experimental religion the supreme evil has as its principal content sin and its evil consequences. Now the term "sin" is commonly understood to have certain religious or theological implications, as when it is said that sin is Godlessness, or transgression of the law of God, or moral evil viewed as antagonistic to the will of God. But in setting forth the presuppositions of theology we must not include what theology has to investigate, and so in this connection we must abstract from all relation to a divine law or will, as well as ignoring for the time being the question whether, in addition to sins against one's self and one's neighbor, there may not also be a sin which is peculiarly a sin against God.

For our present purposes, then, we may begin with the preliminary and incomplete definition of sin as some sort of wrong conduct, together with the character which results from it and which tends to express itself in a repetition of similar wrong conduct. Character in this connection may be taken to mean relatively fixed habits, principles, and likes or dislikes. Conduct is action for the sake of consequences, the conscious employment of means to realize an end or ends; and whatever further qualification completely right conduct may have, it must be the use of right means to realize good ends. The question as to what end is for the acting subject in a given situation the good end must be answered ultimately by moral intuition, i. e., by an immediate but not uncritical appreciation of absolute or

ultimate values, and an adequate appreciation of the relative worth and mutual compatibility of various goods. (This "intuition," or appreciation, it should be stated, is a matter of feeling and will, and not of reason alone.) If the good end is to be intelligently chosen, then, there must be an appreciation of the superior worth of absolute and permanent values, as compared with such as are but instrumental and temporary. But more than this is necessary. On the basis of an appreciation of the absolute value (potential, if not actual) of all personal life, the goods appreciated as absolute must be desired for all persons, and their greatest possible ultimate well-being made the end of individual action. That is wrong conduct in which something less than the greatest total true good of all persons is made the end of action. Lack of appreciation of the highest (i. e., the absolute and eternal) goods, as compared with those the appreciation of which calls for less spiritual development, may be called *sensuousness*. It is being guided by animal impulse, rather than by the highest ideals. On the other hand, lack of appreciation of the equal rights of others to be regarded as ends, instead of being used as mere means, is *selfishness*.

But fully right conduct must not only aim at the highest possible good of all concerned; it must employ the best available means for realizing these imperative ends. What the best means are must be discovered ultimately by empirical methods—observation and experiment. For conduct is sometimes wrong through *ignorance* of the best means to employ in order to realize ends rightly recognized as valid.

But it often happens that wrong conduct is not due to ignorance alone or principally, Socrates to the contrary notwithstanding. Even when there is correct information as to the sequence of cause and effect, and therewith as to the right means to employ in order to realize desired ends, often the right action does not follow. It is not that the intellect is mistaken, but that the will is bad. Nor is this always due to the individual's nature having not yet learned to appreciate the higher values, although this is often a factor. Neither is it enough in all cases to point to an unfortunate inheritance of instinct, or to the fact of long habituation to an inadequate way of acting, or to the individual will being overborne by social pressure, i. e., temptation of one

sort or another, such as custom, conventionality, fads and fashions, institutionalized thought and procedure, the influence of mob mind, or personal persuasion. Commonly some of these are factors which enter into the causation of the wrong conduct, but there is generally, if not always, a failure to exert moral effort to the utmost possible, a spiritual *indolence* which leads one to neglect to give sufficient attention to the ascertaining of values. Or this spiritual inertia or laziness may even lead one to consent to recognized evil, rather than to choose, if necessary, the line of greatest resistance, in order to overcome the influence of inheritance or habit or social pressure, or to lead to an adequate knowledge of good ends and right means. Of course it must be recognized that many times the bad will expressed in individual wrong conduct is not simply or perhaps chiefly the bad will of the individual agent; it is often that of some social group as well, and perhaps in much the larger part. But wherever there is less attention given to determining considerations than is needed and might well be given, there the will is bad, whether it be the will of a particular individual, or that of a social group, or both.

If then we define sin more narrowly than before as wrong conduct and character for which the subject, whether individual or social, is responsible, blameworthy, it remains to state more methodically the criteria of the degree of this blameworthiness, or guilt. The problem of responsibility is the question of free conscious causation. There can be no transfer of the guilt of wrong action from the conscious and consenting doer to any other person. But the solution of the problem as to just how far the wrongdoer is responsible, and so as to just how guilty he is, involves a somewhat intricate analysis of the factors entering into the act. Defining intention as the idea of all the consequences expected to follow from the act, and consented to, whether willingly or reluctantly, in deciding to perform it, it is easily seen that, other things being equal, guilt for a wrong action varies directly as the evil intention (EI) and inversely as the good intention (GI). Motive being the idea of the expected consequence for the sake of which the act is decided upon, guilt is seen to vary again directly as the evil motive (EM) and inversely as the good motive (GM). "Good" and "evil" in

these instances are determined, of course, by means of the idea of the greatest possible genuine good, or well-being, of all persons. Sometimes there is little actual foresight of consequences, but if the action is wrong, the guilt varies directly as the possible foresight (PF), and also directly as the signs of the desirability (SD) of gaining further knowledge of consequences. In these two factors are included both the accessibility of the facts and the native sagacity of the agent. Again, if the wrong act is committed against good instincts (gi), or inherited impulses, the guilt is greater; if in accord with evil instincts (ei), it is, other things being equal, less. Similarly, if the wrong act is committed in opposition to the good mores (gm), or customary morality of the community, the doer is the more guilty on that account; if in harmony with the evil mores (em), he is the less guilty. Again, if the wrong deed is committed against good habits unconsciously formed (GHU), the guilt is greater; if in accord with evil habits unconsciously formed (EHU), it is less. But if committed in accord with evil habits consciously formed (EHC), or against good habits consciously formed (GHC), the case is somewhat ambiguous. Because he acts according to habit, he seems less guilty; but, because the habit was consciously formed, more guilty if the habit was bad, and deserving credit in the light of the past if the habit was good. The solution of the problem is found in deciding whether to judge the single *act*, or, as is now approved in scientific penology, to judge the *man* for this act, but in the light of his whole relevant record. In the former case, i. e., judging the single act, we should have to say that the guilt was greater, according as there was a good habit, making it easier to avoid the wrong act; or that the guilt was less, according as there was an evil habit, making it hard to avoid the evil act. But in judging the man in the act instead of the act in its isolation we should have to say that the guilt was greater in view of the underlying evil habit having been consciously formed, but that it would have been less, if it had taken place in spite of habitual good action in this connection in the past. There remains the social factor, or temptation, to be considered. Using the term broadly, so as to include social pressure, or temptation, toward good, as well as toward evil, we should have to make the following distinctions: the guilt is

greater according as the wrong act is committed against temptation toward good, if this social influence came unsought (GTU); but less, if in accord with temptation to evil, coming unsought (ETU). Again, having sought temptation to evil (ETS) leaves the man, judged for the act, but in the light of its antecedents, the more guilty; while having sought temptation to good (GTS) leaves the man, in view of his record, the less guilty. But if it be insisted that the final wrong act alone be judged in its isolation, we may say that the *additional* guilt incurred by one who yields to a temptation which he was previously induced, whether by inner or outer pressure, to seek, is less in view of this seeking. But in the case of one who commits the wrong by turning in the opposite direction to that in which he was going just before, when he was seeking good social influences, the *additional* guilt incurred by the final act is greater by reason of this sudden lapse from good.

The results of our analysis of the chief factors that enter into guilt, or responsibility for wrong conduct, may then be set forth in the two following diagrams, the former of which represents the judgment to be passed upon the isolated wrong act, and the latter that to be passed upon the man as a whole, in view of this last wrong action. The numerator of the fraction represents in each case the factors according to which the guilt varies directly, and the denominator the factors according to which it varies inversely.

(1) $\dfrac{(EI).(EM).(PF).(SD).(gi).(gm).(GHU).(GHC).(GTU).(GTS)}{(GI).(GM).\quad (ei).(em).(EHU).(EHC).(ETU).(ETS)}$

(2) $\dfrac{(EI).(EM).(PF).(SD).(gi).(gm).(GHU).(EHC).(GTU).(ETS)}{(GI).(GM).\quad (ei).(em).(EHU).(GHC).(ETU).(GTS)}$

Before accepting any such result as final, we ought, perhaps, to consider a view which has been advanced more than once in the history of thought, viz., that all guilt on account of wrongdoing is infinite. This has been maintained in view of the conviction of the moral consciousness that neither can any amount of pleasure or pecuniary advantage to be gained, justify the doing of wrong, nor can the desire to avoid any amount of suffering, however great. Assuming, then, that the guilt of all sin is infinite, the idea of different degrees of guilt loses all

practical significance. But the truth is not that there are no degrees of guilt, or of moral good and evil; rather is it that moral values are so absolute as to be incommensurable with non-moral and merely sensuous values. There are different degrees of guilt, but the exact degree of guilt attaching to any individual for a wrong action is, as we have seen, exceedingly difficult to ascertain, even, it may be added, when that individual is one's self. And so great is the difficulty of estimating the degree of blameworthiness to attach to another for his wrong conduct, that there is suggested once more the propriety of the injunction, "judge not." This is very far, however, from meaning that to know all would be to forgive all. We are intuitively conscious that such is not true of much of our own wrong conduct, and the "intuition," unlike some others, is one which is well able to stand the test of criticism. Indeed the guilt of conscious and deliberate sin *is* immeasurably great; in strict justice it "hath never forgiveness." But even the man who has thus sinned may not only be forgiven without a violation of justice, but must, according to strict justice, be forgiven, provided that, by sincere repentance, he becomes so essentially different in will that that sinful act no longer expresses his true character. And in any case, judgment sufficient for the purposes of diagnosis and attempted remedy will generally be found possible, if one will but take the necessary pains; it is an absolute and infallible judgment as to the exact degree of guilt, such as would be required as a basis of perfectly just retribution, that may well be regarded as transcending the capacities of the human mind.

But it is not sinful conduct alone which constitutes the evil from which, in the experimental religion fundamental to empirical theology, deliverance is sought. The evil consequences, or "penalties," of sinful action are also included. As the criteria of right and wrong conduct are to be found in the consequences, so too the penalties are to be found in the consequences. There is this difference, however, that the criteria are the consequences considered according to the weight they *ought* to have, and do have for the thoughtful and moral, whereas the "penalties" are the evil consequences of wrong action, considered according to the weight which they have or will have for the doer, who is, as such, to begin with at least, a person of sinful mind and

will. Not all evil consequences are felt by the evil-doer to be penalties. Indeed the most serious of the evil consequences, viz., the evil consequences to others and in his own character, may scarcely be felt by the hardened evil-doer to be penalties or evils at all. Physical suffering is almost the only penalty which some people are able to appreciate as such. It is perhaps well that sooner or later there are generally painful consequences to make those who are indifferent to considerations of character and the welfare of others aware of the mistaken course they have been pursuing. For such persons to be able permanently to sin without discomfort would be to suffer hopeless perdition.

In undertaking to set forth the main penalties of sin, the method will be that of empirical observation, so far as evil consequences in the present life are concerned. But then, assuming tentatively that there is a future life, i. e., taking account of it as a possibility, and assuming also that with the continuity of personal existence the laws of mind still obtain, certain inferences may be drawn with reference to the evil consequences of sin in that future state.

First, then, with reference to the present life, observation shows that certain forms of wrong conduct are followed by loss of energy, economic loss, dread forms of painful and loathsome disease, and premature death. But even more serious, and following without fail are such consequences as deterioration of character, bondage to evil habit, loss of moral power, and deadness to the higher spiritual appeals. Moreover, these more immediate consequences have as their natural sequel, on the one hand, an increasing alienation from the privilege of the most desirable personal relationships, and on the other hand, if the nature has not become so degraded as to be insensible, a painful sense of guilt, with shame, remorse, fear of detection and of further evil consequences, and many times a despair such as would covet annihilation. And all the time there is another penalty which would be torture to a more moral will, viz., the consciousness that others whom one has influenced to sin may be going on in the wrong direction as a consequence of one's evil influence, being further corrupted and corrupting others. Oftentimes, too, in addition to the natural evil consequences, the individual has to endure artificial penalties, rightly or

wrongly imposed, for remedy or for retribution, in the home, the school, the state and society in general.

But not only does the individual suffer the evil consequences of his own wrong conduct. Much more tragic is the way in which the social group, such as the community, suffers the consequences of its wrong-doing or of that of its representatives or rulers, or of the governments of other peoples. In particular, war with its attendant evils is the "hell" which tends to follow as the natural consequence of international unrighteousness.

With regard to the nature of the penalties of sin in a future existence, it may be said that here again the inevitable consequences constitute the penalty. Assuming the same laws of character-formation in a future existence as obtain in this, we may mention increasing moral degradation as the most dreadful, if not the most dreaded, of these personally experienced consequences. There is nothing arbitrary about this penalty; he who knew better, but did wrong, shall, so far as corruption of character is concerned, be beaten with "many stripes," as compared with the one who did wrong ignorantly. Moreover, there is not, so far as we can say, any absolute limit to the possible degradation that may take place in an indefinitely prolonged future existence; this is the really to be dreaded "bottomless pit." Besides, as a consequence of this increasing degradation there must ensue an alienation from the most desirable personal relationships; so far as these are concerned the individual becomes "a castaway," "lost" in "outer darkness." Indeed the persistent sinner would find himself, not arbitrarily but naturally and inevitably, cast out, as it were, upon the refuse-heap of the universe, to suffer the mental pains of remorse amd shame and tormenting fear in the "Gehenna of fire," the spiritual counterpart of that defiled place in the valley of Hinnom (*Gehenna*) outside the walls of Jerusalem where the refuse of the city was thrown, and where the fire that devoured it was kept continually burning. In fine, if war is a present "hell," is it not likely that the future hell will be, with its inevitable conflict of selfish wills, a state of war, and that without promise of either victory or peace?

In answer to the question as to the duration of these future

evil consequences of evil-doing, not much can be said, at least in the present connection, i. e., among the presuppositions of theology, where of course there must be no dependence upon the idea of a Divine Being. There is something which may be said, however. On the one hand there is the fact that character tends to permanence. On the other hand, the continuation of conscious existence would seem to involve, theoretically at least, the continued possibility of a change of will. Where there is consciousness, there seems always to be some power, however slight, of alternative possibilities in the directing of the attention, which may therefore, so far as we can say, be turned at some future time toward a better way than that which has been followed hitherto. Perhaps, too, the evil consequences of the wrong course of action will be realized to such an extent that a desire for a change of will may be engendered. Even remorse and despair, the moods traditionally supposed to be characteristic of the mental state of those who have died unrepentant, would be far from being, from the point of view of the observer, the most truly hopeless states; a hardened indifference would argue a much more hopeless condition. But even if we may be inclined to cherish the hope that it will never be absolutely too late for some change for the better, we should not close our eyes to the truth that it is always too late for the realization, at any particular time, not only for one's self but for others as well, of all the good that might have been realized had the evil action not been committed. Both on this account, and because of what every moral failure is in itself, it must remain forever regrettable that in any particular instance the evil rather than the good was chosen. And of the actual evil consequences of sin in the future life, there is no better prospect than that they will be, to use the New Testament word, "age-long."

CHAPTER VI

The Presupposition Peculiar to Theology: The Existence of God

In the case of each of the special descriptive sciences there is one presupposition which is peculiar to that science alone. It is the assumption that the subject-matter of the science exists and is accessible to human experience in such a way that knowledge of it is possible. Thus chemistry presupposes the existence of matter and its accessibility to human experience; biology assumes the same with reference to life, as does psychology with reference to consciousness and sociology with reference to society. Similarly theology as an empirical science presupposes the existence of the divine Object and its sufficient accessibility to experience for the possibility of knowledge of at least some of its qualities and relations. Of course what is assumed here is not the existence of God, or the divine Object, *as fully defined and described.* That can be affirmed, according to scientific procedure, only at the end of our empirical investigation. As in other empirical sciences, what is presupposed is *that* the object is, while *what* the object is is what has to be discovered.

But in assuming that God, or the divine Object as the special subject-matter of theology, exists, a *preliminary* definition of that object is presupposed. That is, the object must be defined sufficiently to mark it off from other possible objects of study. Such a preliminary definition would be "the necessary objective Factor in experimental religion," or "the Object of religious dependence," or "the Source of religious deliverance from evil." As a matter of fact the person who is able to assume, at the outset of his methodical theological investigations, that this divine Object exists, will already commonly be in a position to make the definition closer and more detailed. Thus, he may be in a position to affirm the existence of "a Power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness," or, more accurately,

a Power, not identical with our empirical selves, which makes for some dependable result (e. g., righteousness) in and through us, when we relate ourselves to that Power in a certain discoverable way. Or, once more, the theological beginner may even be in a position to affirm the existence of a Being great enough and good enough to enable us, when rightly related thereto, to be spiritually prepared for whatever experience we may have to meet. These more detailed definitions of God should not be insisted upon as *presuppositions*, however. Whether or not such characteristics are to be attributed to God is part of the problem which empirical theology has to investigate.

Now the basis for this initial special presupposition in theology, as in other sciences, is pre-scientific experience of the object. There is a pre-botanical experience and knowledge of plants which is the necessary preliminary to starting upon scientific botanical investigation. And there is a pre-theological experience and knowledge of the divine Reality, preliminary to the science of theology. On the basis of a religious intuition, a cognitive religious experience which is able to stand the test of practical and intellectual criticism, there has been achieved a pre-theological assurance that the divine Being exists. This religious intuition is a special instance of *perception in a complex*, other examples of which are the intuitive awareness of one's own existence (in conscious experience), of the existence of other persons (in social experience), and of physical objects (in sense experience). In the complex of religious experience, at least of religious experience at its best, the religious subject is aware, in an empirical intuition, of the existence of the religious Object, an Object of religious dependence which proves to be a Source of religious deliverance. The detailed development and defense of this view belong to the epistemological part of the philosophy of religion.

If, then, we are conscious of having had personal experience of the divine Reality, we know *that* God exists, although *what* God is can only be properly determined in detail through a scientific theological procedure, dependent always upon verification in religious experience. Indeed, it would seem that the only conclusive argument for the existence of God, ultimately, is the empirical argument. An indication, even if in bare out-

line, of the grounds for this statement will involve reference to the classical arguments for the existence of God.

The classical theistic arguments are the moral, the cosmological or ætiological, the teleological and the ontological. To these has been added the epistemological, or idealistic. This idealistic argument for the existence of God is to the effect that physical objects are mere ideas, capable of existing, therefore, only in some mind, but inasmuch as physical objects existed before there were any human minds and exist now independently of all human minds, they must exist and have existed in a superhuman or divine mind. In criticism of this argument it may be said in the first place that the "divine mind," the existence of which is said to be established by this argument, would not necessarily be the divine Power in which experimental religion is interested.

But, unless the idealistic position itself can be established, this idealistic argument for theism of course falls to the ground. And indeed there is good ground for a radical distrust of idealistic speculation. Of opposition to *practical* idealism there is here no thought; that *ideals* are valid and practically efficient, and that the universe must be interpreted in such a way as to allow for this, is unquestioned. But with *theoretical* idealism, the doctrine that all reality, or the physical universe at least, is essentially *idea*, the case is obviously different. That we represent things in our judgments by means of ideas, does not prove that the represented things are ideas. And that all things of which we are conscious are necessarily related to the conscious subject, does not prove that all things of which we are or can be conscious are dependent for their existence upon their relation to some conscious subject, even if there are some contents of experience (illusory elements, hallucinatory objects, etc.) that are thus dependent. Nor will it do to reason as follows: (Some) knowledge is possible (since the contradictory of this proposition is self-contradictory); therefore reality (as a whole, or in general) is intelligible, i. e., rational, i. e., spiritual, mental, or ideal. The fallacies of this typical argument for idealism are obvious.*

* Illogical conversion, or illicit minor in the proposition, "Reality is intelligible," and equivocation in the use of the term "rational."

But if the idealistic "proof" of theism must be regarded as wholly discredited, the same can hardly be said of the above mentioned "classical" arguments. Elements of value are to be found in the moral, the cosmological and the teleological "proofs," and even the ontological argument, or what remains of it after its many transmutations in the history of philosophy, may be said still to have the first and final word in the establishment of theism. Only it must not be the old, purely *apriori* form of the ontological argument, but its modern empirical form. Similarly the moral, cosmological and teleological arguments for the existence of God have their full value only when brought into association with the argument from religious experience.

The essential element in the ontological argument is the conviction that, given the true idea of God, the existence of God ought to be readily proved. But in its older form, as an attempt to *deduce* the existence of God from the idea of God as a perfect Being, it amounts simply to the most glaring instance on record of the common fallacy of begging the question. As W. E. Hocking has said, "No proof of God can be deductive . . . the ontological argument in its true form is a report of experience." The procedure, from this point of view, is as follows: There are some ideas which we never could have had without first having had an experience of the realities of which they are the ideas. In such cases one can pass immediately, without doubt or difficulty, from the idea to an affirmation of the existence of that of which it is the idea. Such an idea is that of Absolute Reality, or Reality as a Whole. We should never have had the idea, if we had never been in immediate, experiental, and therefore cognitive relations with Absolute Reality, and if we had not been in that experience intuitively conscious that the Reality in the presence of which we were was *one* Reality, a Whole. In so far, then, as Reality as a Whole has significance as an object of experimental religion, we may be said to have here the ontological argument in a convincing, because empirical form. And it is in the experience that the proof of the existence is to be found.

But this does not carry us very far. Practical, experimental religion is interested in making a distinction within Reality as

a Whole; it seeks evidence of the existence of a Power operating somewhere within Reality as a Whole, a Power which can be regarded as divine and made the Special Object of religious dependence. And here, whether we approach the question from the point of view of the moral, the cosmological, or the teleological argument, the *proof* of the existence of the God in which religion is interested can only be empirical, the verification of the right idea of God in the right religious experience.

The moral argument is commonly associated with the Kantian point of view, but it is also the essentially pragmatic argument. It consists in the postulate of the reality of God, on the ground that his existence, or belief in his existence, is morally necessary; not simply, as Kant seems to have felt, to guarantee immortality and the adequate happiness of the virtuous in a future life, but rather for the gaining of that special experience of deliverance, of liberation, of moral uplift through religious dependence, which in the language of moral religion itself is called "salvation." It is thus the feeling that there ought to be a God, transformed by the "will to believe" into the assertion that there must be and is a God. But to be convinced of the moral need of God is not to escape religious agnosticism. Belief based upon the mere will to believe, even when that belief is thoroughly moral, does not amount to knowledge. It is still an unverified hypothesis. It is only when the God whom man needs for the realization of his highest possibilities is experienced, found "revealed," in an experience which can be called "salvation," that man *knows* "that God is, and that he is the rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Thus the moral or pragmatic argument needs to be supplemented by the empirical argument, the argument from practical religious experience, before it is adequate as a proof of the existence of God.

The cosmological argument to the effect that we must posit an adequate first cause of the universe, and that this adequate first cause is God, is commonly supposed to have been left by Kant dilapidated beyond repair. Of his two main criticisms, that the argument involves an unjustifiable use of the category of causality beyond all possible human experience, and that in any case we could not know that the first cause so inferred

was what we mean by God, it is the second only that should be regarded as valid. When we note that as a matter of fact we can and must use our most fundamental categories, including that of causality, beyond the realm within which direct human experience is ever possible, and that even Kant himself constantly did so, we are ready to see the point of the argument that the affirmation of an adequate first creative cause is at once legitimate and necessary, any alternative involving the self-contradictory notion of an actual infinite number of causes and effects up to date. Indeed it may be maintained that the only *real* cause, as distinguished from mere antecedents, must be a first or creative cause. But the other objection to the cosmological argument remains. We are still, so far as religion is concerned, upon the ground of agnosticism. All that the argument proves is that there must be *some* adequate creative first cause of the universe. What further that first cause is, and whether or not it is the God of religious faith, are questions which the argument leaves unanswered.

There is a causal argument, however, which does reach to the God of religion as the ultimate cause. This again is the argument from religious experience. When a man learns from his practical religious experience that there is a Factor in Absolute Reality upon which he can depend to produce, in response to the proper religious adjustment, a certain needed religious experience—not an emotional experience, except incidentally, but an uplift toward the ideal, especially the moral ideal, and an inner preparedness for anything that can befall him,—he has come to know God as the cause of the essential thing in his religious experience, that is, as the "Author" of his "salvation." Whether this creative Cause of man's "salvation" is to be identified or regarded as organically connected with the creative First Cause of the universe, is a question for theological and metaphysical theory; but in the developed religious consciousness there is an anticipatory intuition—not to be taken uncritically—that some such idea will prove to be the truth.

The teleological argument, by means of which it was supposed that one might prove the existence of God as the designer of the adaptations occurring in nature, has suffered much at

the hands of its critics. In the first place, we have Kant, with his objection, already noted, to the application of the causal category beyond possible experience, and his remark that the teleological argument would prove only a great Architect, and not God. Then come Darwin and his followers, showing, through their theories of natural and germinal selection, how unnecessary is the conception of this external Architect with his detailed plan according to which all adaptations are predetermined. And yet, on the other hand, we have in recent vitalism the plausible but perhaps not fully established theory of a non-mechanical factor in life-processes, directing the development of structure and the discharge of function, and the impressive doctrine of a creative and directive life-impulse underlying the facts of evolution and giving rise to an increasingly elaborate and even dangerous complication of living forms. Rejecting as before Kant's rather dogmatic agnosticism, we would maintain that the facts of physical life strongly suggest, not indeed design in any such sense as would involve complete predetermination, but an adequate and therefore not purely mechanical creative cause fundamental to the life-history of the individual organism and to those factors in evolution which operate prior to natural and even germinal selection. Besides, the vitalistic interpretation of human freedom lends color to this supermechanical theory of life in general. Moreover, the highly complex fitness of the environment to be the abode of physical life in its developing forms strongly suggests a teleological interpretation of the constitution of the inorganic world. It must be maintained, however, that the argument does not thus far conduct us out of religious agnosticism. We do not, apart from further light, know that this adequate and seemingly creative cause of evolution or of other possibly teleological processes in nature is the God of experimental religion.

Nevertheless, there is a teleological argument which does directly indicate the existence of the God in which the developed religious consciousness is interested. This again is the empirical argument, the argument from the practical religious experience of spiritual "salvation." Through a critical and sufficiently sympathetic study of the history of practical re-

ligious experience there arises an understanding of what it is that the religious Object really can be depended upon to produce, the religious Object being defined as that Factor in human experience which produces, on occasion of man's continued right relation, a definite and qualitatively predictable result. The result in question is found to be what religion itself has called "sanctification" or "growth in grace," a growing conformity of the religious individual or community to the ideal or "divine" type. As this Factor which can be depended upon to guide the spiritual development of those who attain to a certain religious adjustment, the God of practical religious experience may be said to have been shown to exist. Whether the creative Cause of this spiritual evolution of the man or the community that has found the right religious adjustment is also the creative cause of biological evolution, is a question to be dealt with further by theological and metaphysical theory; but here again the developed religious consciousness intuitively surmises that there is either an identity or a close organic connection between the directive causal factor in the one set of instances and in the other.

Finally we come once more to the ontological argument. Here again it is in connection with the empirical argument that it has its true place. It is not from the mere idea of God that we can prove the existence of God, but from a consciousness of God which is at the same time an experience of God. But it should be recognized that this experience of God must be a *practical* religious experience, or, if a mystical intuition, one that stands the test of practice as well as of reflection. The mystic does not really know on sufficiently critical grounds that the object of his mystical contemplation is a really existent divine Being, unless back of the mystical experience there has been the practical religious experience of "salvation," with its "revelation" of the presence and power of God, making the human spirit ready for anything that may have to be endured or done, and bringing deliverance from sin and all absolute evil. This God of practical religion is not known in the religious experience as the Whole of Absolute Reality, but rather as a Factor in the Whole, sufficient to be the cause of the religious experience of salvation. Just *what* God is, is to be learned, as

we have already suggested, through a scientific, empirical, theological procedure, making use of observation and experiment in the practical religious life.

And here we come upon the true place of the ontological argument. When man's practical religious experience is what it ought to be, and his idea of God has become sufficiently empirical and scientific, he will know that the God of which he has an idea really exists. He will be assured, not only that there is a total Absolute Reality, but that the God of his theology is a fact of his practical religious experience, and so an absolute objective reality. Thus we see that while ability to use the ontological argument in its most rudimentary form, i. e., with reference to Absolute Reality, ought to be one of the easiest and earliest achievements of reflective thought, ability to use the argument in its final form, i. e., with reference to the completely defined Object of practical religious dependence, is an ideal, not fully realized as yet, perhaps, by anyone. On the one hand our experience of God is not deep or definite enough, and on the other hand our idea of God is not yet empirical or scientific enough; and each of these defects is aggravated by the other.

The speculative theologian undertakes to say *what* God is, but finds it difficult to show *that* God is; the mystic, on the other hand, is assured *that* God is, but hesitates to say *what* God is. But neither achievement avails much without the other. A theology scientifically constructed upon the basis of experience of the divine Reality should add to our knowledge of what God is and to our certainty that he is. It should normally culminate, then, in the assured reaffirmation of the existence of God in immediate connection with a detailed description of the divine attributes and relations. And when in this way the so-called ontological argument can be used as unhesitatingly at the end of the theological construction as at its beginning, it will tend to confirm the view that God has been truly described as well as really experienced. When these two conditions are adequately met, further *argument* for the existence of God will have become unnecessary.*

* Several of the immediately preceding paragraphs have been reproduced, with slight modifications, from an article by the author in the "Philosophical Review" for January, 1914.

For the present, however, in setting forth the *presuppositions* of theology, we cannot assert the existence of God as part of a theory constructed upon the basis of the laws of empirical theology. We may affirm it, however, in either one of two ways. We may assume the existence of an Object of religious dependence and Source of religious deliverance as already intuitively and practically certain on the basis of normal religious experience, leaving it to be seen whether this intuition and practical certainty will or will not stand the test of a more methodical empirical investigation. Or, if the would-be empirical theologian finds himself lacking in the desired assurance of the reality of the divine, he may still employ as a fundamental working hypothesis the idea of the God whose existence religious need would lead him to postulate. By acting intelligently upon the religious hypothesis, he will best fulfill the conditions of the experience in the light of which the assertion of the existence of God can be made with adequate assurance.

It should be understood, however, that this initial supposition of the existence of a divine Reality is not to be made the basis of any other presuppositions of theology; nor is it to be used as an assumption from which conclusions are to be drawn beyond what is supported by religious experience itself. In stating it explicitly as a presupposition, we are simply recognizing an instance of that common pre-scientific knowledge of the subject-matter of the special sciences without which the special methodical investigation which we call science could scarcely have begun at all.

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PART II

THE EMPIRICAL DATA AND LAWS OF THEOLOGY

CHAPTER I

Revelation in General

If there is to be a scientific empirical theology, there must be empirical data for it to be based upon. That is, there must be facts of the recognizable presence of the divine within the human, or, at any rate, within the field of human experience. In other words, there must be *revelation* of the divine. Experimental religion has been able to maintain its vitality, only as it has been able to point to facts that, for the time being at least, could be regarded as revelation, i. e., as manifestation of the presence of the divine Being, or of the present activity of the divine Power.

In primitive religion the content of "revelation" tended to consist, for the most part, of certain spectacular and as yet occult occurrences in nature and in mind, which, as especially awe-inspiring, or "holy," or—in some crude adumbration of the religious rather than philosophical sense of the term—"miraculous," were ascribed to the mysterious power or powers with which man believed himself to be surrounded, and upon which he felt that he was ultimately dependent. At the same time the community had its recognized social values—certain possessions, persons, times, places, natural objects and events, and human acts that were (originally because of their real or supposed practical value to the community) "sacred." It was only natural for optimistic religious faith to look, if not for a complete coincidence, at least for a working harmony between the mysteriously "holy" and the socially "sacred." Through adjustment to the mysterious Power "revealed" in the "holy," it was thought to conserve and promote the "sacred." Often, through coincidence or crude anticipation of scientific procedure, success was achieved, and the devotee was "saved," supposedly by the divine power, from some experienced or threatening evil. But many times religious faith was disap-

pointed. The "divine," or supposedly favorable mysterious power, to which prayers and gifts were offered and other religious adjustments made, was not always "revealed" as acting as a reasonable deity, it was supposed, ought to act. Indeed so perverse and uncontrollable did the mysterious power often appear, that it is not surprising that certain events came to be interpreted as revealing not a divine but a diabolical power, or a conflict of divine beings.

But the occult and awe-inspiring events in the realm of mind seemed to be somewhat more controllable than those in the realm of external nature. Certain individuals—the shamans, for instance—developed a technique for inducing experiences in which visions, auditions and vocal automatisms had part, and which were interpreted as instances of divine "inspiration," producing "revelation" of the divine mind and will. Moreover, this supposed revelation was regarded as having divine authority, by virtue of the process of inspiration. Thus there began to be laid the foundation for a system of religious belief which should be empirical, and therefore at the same time a "natural" and "revealed" theology. But in its primitive form it rested upon such an identification of the divine with the occult, that it could not be made scientific. The best that could ever be developed on this basis was a one-sided and extreme mystical religion and theology, in which the values of everyday practical life would be denied and the ordinary religious individual be left under the external authority of the mystic. In its original shamanistic form, apart from the fact that the religious experience was not for the common individual, there was the still greater difficulty that even when the supposed inspiration had been induced, the resultant "revelation" was often—probably oftener than not—misleading. There were multitudes of "false prophets," whose predictions were not fulfilled, and whose teachings ran counter to the best interests and ideals of the social group. (Psychologists of religion commonly use the *words* "inspiration" and "revelation" in this original sense, as referring to these occult experiences and their noetic content—without, of course, attaching any notion of objective validity to the terms.)

The unsatisfactoriness of this primitive, occult phase of the inspiration and revelation faith led in time to the attempt to

standardize these religious notions, so that there might be a universally accessible revelation, the same for all, and one which would embody what had been already tested and found satisfactory. Thus the canon of sacred scriptures was formed, the various parts of which on the whole may be said to have been selected because of their experienced value. These were set up as embodying the authoritative revelation, and in support of this dogma there was developed the theory of the inspiration of the Scriptures, according to which even the words employed were dictated by the divine Spirit ("verbal inspiration"). Or if, as was felt by some, so much as that could not well be maintained in view of the marks of individual human authorship, at least all the thoughts, it was claimed, were divinely imparted ("plenary inspiration"). In either case the documents resulting from this process of "inspiration" were held to be, or at least to have been in their original form, a perfect "revelation," the pure "Word of God," and an absolutely inerrant and infallible "rule of faith and practice." The fact of inspiration itself was supposed to be adequately guaranteed by the miracles recorded in the same infallible, because inspired, because miraculously attested Scriptures!

Thus the basis was laid for a "revealed theology," sharply contrasted with "natural theology" (which might still be employed to establish the existence of God and the reasonableness of the expectation of revelation). This "revealed theology" was not, however, properly speaking, empirical; on the contrary it was traditionalistic and dogmatic, and thus precluded from the outset from ever becoming really scientific. Moreover, certain difficulties arose when ordinary scientific methods of historical and literary criticism were applied in the study of the sacred writings. It became evident that with all their value and whether in any sense "divine" or not, they were unmistakably fallible, human documents. They might in some sense "contain" the word of God, but they could no longer be regarded as the divine Word in the sense claimed in the doctrines of verbal and plenary inspiration.

Parallel with the taking up of a critical attitude toward the traditionalistic notion of revelation and inspiration, there grew up the rationalistic notion, according to which the ultimate

authority in religion as elsewhere is the "dry light of reason." According to rationalism the only revelation is that of discovery through the rational intellect, interpreted as the progressive self-manifestation of divine Reason in and through the developing human reason. Here all theology becomes natural theology, the chief difficulty being to find any ultimate distinction between religious truth and any other. For while rationalism adopts a more or less patronizing attitude toward empirical science, its own procedure is not scientific in the empirical sense, but simply speculative. It finds no more value for knowledge of the divine in religious experience than in any other type of experience. Any experience will do well enough as a basis for the dialectic, which leads, it is claimed, to the Absolute, or Absolute Reason, as the only true God, and one which may thus be known without any aid from experimental religion. The ideas and intuitions of historical religions are ignored, as containing, presumably, comparatively little that has real revelation-value.

The untenability, from a critical point of view, of the traditionalistic notion of revelation, inspiration and authority, and the barren abstractness of the rationalistic view, are driving theology back to the more original, yet possibly more permanent religio-empirical approach, the hope being that it will be found feasible to substitute for the occult notions of primitive thought the scientific principles and methods of modern investigation. What is imperatively needed for the well-being of religion is a basis in experience for a theology which shall again be at once both *natural* and *revealed.* Such a theology might well retain the vitality of historic religion even while it was achieving the validity of scientific method.

Now the data for such a scientific theology must be the facts revealed in religious perception. For it is not enough to appreciate the divine qualities as ideal; there must be perception of the divine as real. What we mean here, or a part of it, is sometimes called "faith"; but the term is objectionable, for the reason that as commonly used it connotes mere belief. On the contrary the religious consciousness, at least at its best, involves experience and recognition of the religious Object, the Divine, as in some real sense *present.* Revelation and religious perception

are thus correlative terms, the objective and subjective poles, respectively, of normal religious experience. They are, within the cognitive religious situation, the stimulus and the response. And these biological terms are not to be used simply in the sense of the older idea of the "reflex arc," according to which in the stimulus only the object is active, while the subject remains passive, and *vice versa* in the response. Stimulus and response are to be understood, rather, in the sense of Dewey's revised notion of co-ordinated reciprocal activities, according to which in the "stimulus" there is some sort of selective activity on the part of the organism, while in the "response" there is an objective factor still operative. Applied to revelation and religious perception this will mean that there is in religious experience a series of co-ordinated reciprocal activities of the divine Being (the religious Object) and the religious subject; there can be no "revelation" without religious perception constituting it such, and even throughout the later phases of the response to this "revelation" there is an objective factor still functioning as revelation, or the presence and activity of the Divine.

Religious perception, like perception generally, involves apperception. And religious apperception, as has been suggested in another connection, includes two main elements, viz., appreciative apperception of religious value, and realistic or substantial-causal apperception of the religious Object as an existent Being. Now religious value, some would contend, should be defined in such a way as to include all spiritual and therefore absolute and eternal values, all absolutely valid ideals. And ultimately, from the point of view of "fundamental religion," this may very well be true. But here we are dealing with religion in the sense of experimental religion; we are concerned not simply with a divine Object of devotion, but with a responding Power as well. Hence we have a definite objective control of the selection of values as religious. Religious value is the kind of value which experimental religion (or, more accurately, the religious Object, *through* experimental religion) can be depended upon to promote, when this experimental religion has become adequately critical and scientific without ceasing to be adequately vital and practical. As a name for positive religious value we may still use the term "holiness"; but it must now be

with that particular modification of its meaning which it bears when it is what is *really* important for human well-being that is regarded as "sacred," and when it is with this that the idea and feeling of religious value have been associated. Now it is a well-known fact of history that in the course of religious progress the content of holiness has been becoming almost steadily less and less occult and magical and more and more human and ethical. Religious value, we may now say, is holiness in the human spirit, the *holy spirit* in man; it is the spiritual, fundamentally the moral, and perhaps ultimately all true value, especially (and for experimental religion, exclusively) as promoted by the right adjustment to the religious Object. It is in this ethically holy human spirit, and in the process of making it more so, that we find the presence, or revelation, of the divine. Or, to use still other expressions of advanced experimental religion, it is in the experience of "salvation" (i. e., deliverance from sin and its evil consequences), in "miracle" (interpreted as the divine production of "holiness" or "salvation"), in the universally experienced or experienceable "answer to prayer" (when it is *true* prayer), that this "special providence" of "revelation" is to be found.

For, as has been noted, religious perception is realistic, and not simply appreciative. Not only does it find a religious value attaching to a content of experience; it finds presented within the field of experience a phase of the activity of the Reality to which the religious adjustment has been made. It is, like other realistic cognition, perception in a complex. As matter, that independently real mass-energy or manifold of energetic things which stimulates us in sense-experience, is revealed as present and operative within the field of sense-perception, in such a way that it can be attended to and made the object of immediate knowledge, so is it with the divine Reality in mature and expert religious perception. The independent Reality or Power to which the persevering experimental religionist finally learns to adjust himself successfully is perceived (experienced and therewith intuitively known) as a present Reality, active within the religious experience of the subject, both stimulating him and responding to his religious adjustments. In other words, *revelation* is the central and most significant fact of religious

experience at its best; it is the consummation of experimental religion. It is another instance of the immanence of the Transcendent—the immanence, within the spiritual life of man, of the transcendent Object of religious dependence. Subjectively expressed, it is man's discovery of God, i. e., of the divine Reality, the question as to whether this Reality is personal or not, and similar matters being reserved for later discussion. It is the experiencing of the recognizable presence of the Object of religious dependence.*

Now in a scientific theology, naturally, other religions besides the Christian may present whatever universally valid empirical revelation they possess, and their contributions will be welcomed. Revelation is presumably as universal as experimental religion of any spiritual value.† But our attention will be directed chiefly to the data made available in the Christian religion. Within the limits of experimental religion the most normative revelation of the divine is to be found, apparently, in the personal life and character of Jesus, "the Christ," in his "atoning" work, in the resultant Christian experience of "salvation," and in the developing "kingdom of God." And for much of our information as to these data, we must go to the Christian Bible. This collection of writings is the most original available record of what seems undoubtedly to be the most significant progressive revelation in the history of experimental religion, leading up to and culminating in the revelation in the "Christ" and in Christian religious experience. Moreover, the Bible was written, speaking broadly, under the inspiring influence of that progressive and culminating revelation. This gives us the true relation between revelation and inspiration. It is not so much the inspiration that, as has commonly been supposed, produces the revelation, as it is the revelation that

* As has been intimated in another connection, the complete justification of the position taken here is a matter for religious epistemology. The writer hopes to discuss it more fully in a work to be entitled "The Problem of Religious Knowledge"—a companion volume to "The Problem of Knowledge," already published.

† Revelation is relative, however. As a candle reveals much to one who is without sunlight, but little to one who is already in the enjoyment of the sunshine, so is it, perchance, with much non-Christian as compared with Christian revelation.

produces the inspiration. Certainly it was not the inspiration of the Christian scriptures that first produced the Christian revelation; but since in the main the New Testament was written under the inspiring influence of the revelation of the divine in the person and work of Jesus and in the Christian experience of salvation from sin, it becomes more than a mere *record* of revelation; when properly used it is a *source* of revelation as well. In itself it is not revelation, or the Word of God, but it mediates the Christian experience of God, i. e., the Christian revelation; it provides the permanent possibility of this Word of God in the soul of man. Moreover, the inspiration of the writers of the documents which make up our Christian scriptures was essentially similar to that inspiring influence of divine revelation which led them to live better lives than formerly, to preach the gospel, to endure hardships for the extension of the "Kingdom," and to do many things besides writing the books which have been gathered into our Bible. And as we have no reason to suppose that they made no mistakes of any sort in their lives or their preaching, so we should not insist that the pamphlets and letters they wrote must be regarded as absolutely inerrant in every particular. Whether it may be possible to speak of the inspiration itself as divine, or even as supernatural in any sense of the word, or not, as a psychical process it was without doubt thoroughly natural.

We are now in a position to discuss the nature of valid religious authority. Commonly it has been associated directly with inspiration, as when it is said that this inspired person or church or book has rightful authority over the individual. But, as Julius Kaftan has remarked, it is much better, because truer, to relate the idea of religious authority directly to revelation, than to make it depend upon supernatural "inspiration." It is the divine as revealed to the individual that has rightful authority over the individual, rather than the mere outcome of some other individual's having been inspired by a religious experience of his own. In other words, in religion as in logic and in morals, the ultimate authority is objective without being purely external, and internal without being purely subjective. We are not obliged to infer, to decide, or to respond religiously, save as our own reason, our own conscience, or our

own religious nature finds what appeals to it as logical, or right, or divine. But on the other hand, we ought not to feel free to infer, to decide or to respond religiously just as we please, without regard to logic, or moral principle, or revelation. It is not our own empirical self, whatever it may chance to be, that is the valid authority, but the universally valid, when we come to be conscious of it as such. It has rightful authority over us, because when we realize its true value, we feel and know that we cannot be true to the best that is in us, or realize our highest possible ideal, if we fail to respond to its appeal. It is significant that of him who is recorded to have taught "as one having authority, and not as the scribes" (who merely *quoted* authorities), the story is told that when he was challenged to produce some authority (presumably external, whether Scriptural, or in some other way traditional, or even by external "miracle"), by means of which he should justify his doing what must have appealed to every right-thinking person who understood the circumstances, as justified on moral, religious, and general humanitarian grounds, he refused to comply with the demand or to recognize its validity. He would not cheapen what he had done by trying to justify it by the mere appeal to "chapter and verse," when it rested upon the obvious internal but objective authority of recognizable duty and unmistakeable human need. Similarly, where revelation of the divine has been *experienced*, the appeal to proof-texts is "to seek with taper light the beauteous eye of heaven to garnish."

CHAPTER II

Revelation in the Person of Christ

In undertaking to set forth the special theological data offered by Christianity, the question arises as to whether it is better to proceed from an appreciation of the *person* of Christ as "divine" to a consideration of his "atoning" life-*work*, together with its results in the Christian experience of "salvation," or to adopt the opposite order. An adequate evaluation of either logically presupposes essential information about the other. This, however, is not reasoning in a circle, just because our procedure is not deductive but inductive. We learn to appreciate the person and the work together, but we can conveniently give an exposition of the two only a certain order, first the one and then the other. We shall begin, then, with the person, anticipating as far as necessary the essential facts as to the work and its results.

Before undertaking a constructive statement on this topic, let us glance at the history of thought and teaching concerning "Jesus, who is called the Christ." We are told that when he was crucified there was set over his head his accusation written in Hebrew, in Greek and in Latin. This is interesting to note, in view of the fact that of all the interpretations and speculations concerning his person which have entered into "orthodox" Christology, some are essentially Hebrew, others Greek, and the remainder Latin.

First let us consider the virgin-birth story, which is probably Jewish-Christian in origin, though possibly not without some extraneous influence. It is a legend, i. e., a bit of unconscious social fiction about an historical personage, and as such it expresses in this instance at once an appreciation of Jesus and an attempt to explain the religious value, the holiness and divineness, of his personality. But even for one who may doubt or disbelieve in the actual historicity of the alleged *fact* of the

virgin-birth, the story may yet have much the same sort of *truth* as often belongs to poetry and parable, although these are commonly more deliberate and individual in their composition than legends, and correspondingly less deeply significant. But the strongest protest should be made, and that on religious grounds, against the tendency in certain quarters to identify belief in the virgin-birth of Christ with belief in (or appreciation of) the divineness of Jesus.

Again, and still in the main within the limits of Jewish-Christian thought, we find the Messianic predicate applied to Jesus. This idea of the Messiahship of Jesus was common to all primitive Christians, but it existed in the early church in several more or less distinct and different forms. One of the most significant of these was what appears to have been the view of the apostle Paul, according to which a pre-existent celestial being voluntarily humbled himself to become incarnate and live and suffer and die in the person of Jesus of Nazareth, in order that, having been raised from the dead by the power of God, he might not only become, at his second advent, the acknowledged Messiah of Israel, but also be the one who, as the "second Adam" of the race, should redeem first certain elect individuals from all nations, then the elect nation, Israel, and ultimately the whole world, from the power of "Satan," as manifested in the universal prevalence of sin and its sequel, death. Now this Pauline Christology seems to be not only the result of the apostle's reflection on the facts of his own experience in the light of the Christian tradition, but also at the same time the product of a not fully deliberate or conscious merging of Jewish and Jewish-Christian Messianic notions with current Greek and Oriental thoughts of a dying and reviving god; and it is not difficult to discover here a mythical element. Myth, like legend, is an unconscious social fiction; but, unlike legend, it centers immediately in a supramundane being, rather than in an historical personage. Like legend, however, it may have the kind of truth which great poetry has; and inasmuch as this myth of "the man from heaven" is attached to the figure of the historic Jesus, it becomes, even from the point of view of a critical understanding of its largely mythical character, a most significant expression of appreciation of the

supreme religious value of a personality and career, the salient facts with respect to which were still matters of recent experience and ready memory to many within the Christian community.

When we come to the fourth Gospel, with its notion of a Logos-Messiah, we begin to pass from the Jewish-Christian to the Greek-Christian world of thought, where we find myth supplemented and to some extent supplanted by metaphysics. In Greek experimental religion interest centered ultimately in deliverance of the individual man from the mortality which, according to Greek philosophical presuppositions, was inherent in humanity. Only the divine, it was maintained, was inherently immortal, so that, if any member of the human race were to have after death any life worthy of the name, he must first have become partaker of the divine nature. Hence the message of a divine humanity in the person of Jesus Christ was from this point of view profoundly interesting. Assuming, then, that unless it could be maintained that in one and the same person humanity and deity were so united that humanity was made to participate in the immortality of deity, there could be no gospel of salvation, Greek-Christian thought, rejecting as heretical all views that failed to make this provision, set to work to construct and defend philosophically such a statement concerning the eternal Logos, incarnate in Jesus, as would fulfil the required condition. Hence it was declared that Jesus Christ was not only genuinely and completely human, but also the second Person of the eternal Trinity, "very God of very God," and that in him as one person the two natures were inseparably but inconfusedly united. Now the doctrine of the three persons in one substance, it may be remarked, can be adequately defended philosophically only from a "Platonic" point of view, while the idea of the two natures in one person required for its rationalization the essentially antagonistic Aristotelian philosophical doctrine. Moreover, apart from the question whether we moderns can be either "Platonists" or Aristotelians (not to speak of trying to be "Platonic" in one part of our theology and Aristotelian in another), it is a fact that the religious presuppositions of the modern Christian are not and cannot be altogether the same as those of the early Greek Christian. Hence

the religious imperativeness of the ancient orthodox Christology no longer obtains for us. But whether we can accept it as literally true or not, we may at least find in it another significant expression of that supreme religious value which in so many different ways at different times has been ascribed to the revelation of God in the Jesus of history.

The Greek orthodox formulation was accepted throughout the Latin Christian world (where the intricacies of Greek metaphysics were not understood) as a practically indispensable dogma resting upon the authority of the Church. Besides, for the Latin mind considerations of sin and guilt were central, rather than those of substance and mortality. It is not surprising, therefore, that eventually there arose in the Western Church a thinker (Anselm) who substituted for the Aristotelian metaphysical notion of the union of the divine and the human in the person of Jesus the pragmatic argument that there was and is a God-man, fully God and fully man, simply because such a God-man was needed in order to make satisfactory payment to God for man's sin, if there was to be any way of salvation for man from the infinite penalty due for the infinite offence of insulting God, an infinite Being. The savior must be God, for only God, as infinite, could endure an infinite suffering in a finite time; and yet he must be man, for only man could rightfully bear the penalty of man's sin. Now the modern mind cannot accept certain presuppositions of this argument, particularly the feudal notion of the guilt of an offence varying with the actual dignity of the person offended, and the crude commerical idea of justice involved in the thought of a transfer of guilt and merit back and forth for external considerations, supported by the "Platonic" notion that as the "universal" (e. g., humanity) is the ultimate reality, it is a matter of no consequence which individual man bears the penalty. And yet, in this characteristically Latin defence of the doctrine of the God-man, we have still another instance of the expression of religious appreciation of the revelation value of the historic Jesus. Still, on the other hand, as in the case of the Greek Christology, so in the case of the Latin, the supposed religious need which the God-man was believed to satisfy must appear to the modern consciousness as in the main artificial and only supposititious.

As a matter of fact we seem to be much nearer to permanently valid concepts in the Johannine attempt to combine the concepts of Messiah and Logos. If we take the idea of the Messiah to be *essentially* that of the one who is the Savior of men by virtue of his being the Revealer and in some sense the Representative of God, and the idea of the Logos as essentially the divine Reason, or Principle of enlightenment, manifested in the rational order of the universe, increasingly in the spiritual progress of the race, and most fully in any one individual in Jesus of Nazareth, we find that these New Testament interpretative concepts are still among the best that the modern-minded Christian can employ.

We have referred to the Hebrew, Greek and Latin roots of the older orthodox Christology. As transitional to the characteristically modern attempts at christological construction, we may mention the doctrine of the Unitarians, who have been in the main the pioneers in the rather thankless task of criticizing the older orthodoxy on rational grounds before popular audiences. Much of their polemic against the older dogmas may be regarded as having been largely successful, but no gospel can be constructed out of negative criticisms, however valid they may be. And too often the impression encouraged by the Unitarian negative emphasis has been that Jesus was *not*, in any important sense of the word, divine. They commonly object to the distinction between deity and divinity, and insist that since it is absurd to say that Jesus, a dependent human being, was God, it remains that he was mere man, and not divine at all. This negation does violence to the intuitive (but not necessarily uncritical) appreciation of the unique value for religion of the historical revelation of the divine presence in the person of Christ.

Of characteristically modern attempts to express the revelation-value of the person of Christ, there are three which claim our attention, viz., that of rationalistic monism, that of empirical pluralism, and that of critical agnosticism.

Rationalistic monism is represented by Hegelianism, with its doctrine that the immanence of rational thought in man is the presence of the divine, so that the claims made for the unique divineness of Jesus would have to be substantiated by showing

his supremacy in the realm of intellect and as the revealer of a true philosophy. This, however, does not give us quite the correct criterion either for what experimental religion chiefly looks for in revelation, or for what is most unique and valuable in the historic Jesus.

Empirical pluralism is represented by the recent attempt of Professor Sanday to apply to Christology William James' notion of a divine communication with man through the subconscious life. According to this view the divine nature of Jesus was ordinarily in the subconscious realm, but occasionally it made itself manifest in the fully conscious department of his life. Then he was enabled to think, speak and act with a more than human insight and power. The trouble here too is that, as in the case of rationalistic monism, justice is done neither to the needs of religion nor to the unique value of Jesus. The revelation which man most needs in religion, and which he can find best in the historic Jesus, is primarily neither an infallible intellectual guidance nor a mysterious contact in the "subconscious"; rather is it experience of a divinely uplifting power in the realm of the moral spirit.

The Christology of critical agnosticism, which is represented by Ritschlianism, recognizes the practical nature of the religious interest in revelation, and of the revelation which is mediated to us through the historic Jesus. Assuming that independent reality is inexperienceable and therefore unknowable, so that any metaphysical theology of the transcendent God is impracticable, the Ritschlians claim that the true religious Object must be found in history, if it is to be found at all. In the person of the historic Jesus they find, they claim, an Object which fulfils the function, has the practical value of God, enabling the responding human individual to rise out of sin and despair into a life of triumph over all that would bring him into subjection to the world. All statements as to the divinity or deity of Christ are therefore, from this point of view, to be interpreted as religious value-judgments, expressions of appreciation of the practical spiritual and particularly religious value of the historic Jesus. Through him our experience is *as if* there were a Christlike, independently existing God, actually revealed as immanent in the life and activity of Jesus; and we may *believe* that such a

power as we might call divine was really in some way present with him. But all we *know* is that through the historic Jesus we *experience* spiritual, particularly moral, salvation, and accordingly evaluate him, the historic source of this salvation-*experience*, as divine, "Godlike." But the main criticism of this *view* is that its notion of revelation is inadequate for experimental religion. We feel the need of dependence ultimately upon the independently existing God, rather than simply upon a man who achieved his own spiritual triumph through dependence upon a God not identical with but greater than himself; and we want revelation in the sense of the actual experienced presence and activity of this ultimate divine Reality.

Turning now to a constructive statement with regard to the person of Christ, we must undertake to do what Unitarianism attempted, viz., to formulate such a view as the modern mind can accept as rational; but at the same time we must seek to conserve the religious values bound up with a responsive attitude toward this historic leader of men much more adequately than historic Unitarianism was able to do. First of all then, it may be noted that from a spiritually cultured point of view the divine *quality* of the personality of Jesus is readily appreciated. His will was devoted to the moral ideal, and the content of that ideal was throughly social. His ambition was to minister as effectively as possible to the highest well-being of his fellow-men, with due regard to the supremacy of moral, social and religious values. He began where he was, and persevered faithfully in the midst of increasing opposition, until at last, rather than compromise with those who were not only his personal enemies but the enemies of the "Kingdom of God," to which he had devoted himself, he left his enterprise with God, and chose for himself the way of death and apparent failure. His was the life which realized (set forth concretely) the essentials of the Hebrew ideal of holiness and of the Greek ideal of wisdom, courage, self-control and justice, and added to these what has become the most distinctive quality in the Christian ideal, viz., unselfish love. Between the opposite extremes of the Buddhist ideal of self-repression and the utter annihilation of desire, with the inevitable human stagnation to which it would lead, and the Nietzschean ideal of remorseless

assertion of the desire for power, with the world-wide warfare which is its logical outcome, the ideal of Jesus was that of absolute self-devotion to the true well-being of humanity, having as its sequel progress instead of stagnation, and righteous peace and social welfare in place of war—in short, the Kingdom of God on earth. The spirit expressed in the self-devotion of Jesus to the true ideal of the well-being of humanity is worthy of supreme admiration, and this supreme admiration, it may be remarked, is, from the standpoint of what we have called "fundamental religion," itself a religious attitude, an appreciation of the "divineness," i. e., religious or revelation-value of the person and life-work of Jesus. Supreme admiration for the human Jesus and loyal responsiveness to his appeal is truer faith in his divinity than acquiescence in all the most extreme formulations of the dogma of his deity.

But to appreciate the ideal quality of the personality and life of Jesus is not all that is possible to the modern man in the way of recognition of his divinity. The attitude of fundamental religion may well be supplemented by that of experimental religion, for in the religious life man needs not only a supreme Ideal, but also a supreme Being, a "living God." To be sure, even from the point of view of fundamental religion one might say that the divine quality is thought of as such only by virtue of a process of abstraction from the immanent spiritual Life, or divine Power. (A one-sidedly intellectualistic variety of this view is exemplified in the rationalistic monism to which we have referred.) But any such intuition would be felt very generally to be insufficiently supported. It is when we interpret the personality and life of Jesus with special reference to his own experimental religion that we get what is perhaps the most fruitful view of his divine character. He was a man of deep personal religion; he had learned to depend upon God, and not in vain, for that reinforcement of the moral will which critical experimental religion finds to be the sort of "special providence" or "answer to prayer" which can be depended upon as the divine response to the human religious adjustment. And in the light of what is empirically known of the value of moral experimental religion in general, the assertion is justified that the achievements of Jesus in the spiritual life and in his

work for the world were decidedly enhanced through his dependence upon God for support and uplift in the life of the spirit. That is, more and more the divine power for the spiritual life became immanent within the life of Jesus, in response to his opening up of his life to God. Here we find the key, doubtless, to the unique degree of divine quality in the character of this man, and to the unique *function* which he was and has been able to discharge in the spiritual history of mankind, by having been adequately prepared for the perhaps unique opportunity which the time and circumstances of his life afforded. We find here not only the presence of the divine power, but a "progressive incarnation," to use Dorner's phrase, meaning thereby, however, that the divinity of Jesus was much more an achievement of his religious experience than a native endowment, however fortunate in his heredity he may have been. Moreover, this view of the divineness of Jesus is especially encouraging, since it shows us that some degree of essentially the same sort of achievement is within the range of present possibility for every sincere and aspiring individual who will begin to cultivate the same sort of personal religion. The view is one which suggests the interpretation of the person of Christ according to empirical pluralism to which we have referred, but it is to be carefully distinguished from any such view, since, while empirical, it does not center the religious experience of man primarily in the subconscious, but primarily in the realm of conscious moral decision and action.

We are now in a position to differentiate our view of the revelation-value of the historic Jesus from the somewhat similar emphasis upon religious value-judgments in the critical agnosticism of the Ritschlians. In the Ritschlian theology the doctrine of the divinity (or deity) of Christ is a religious value-judgment, meaning not that God, or the divine Spirit, was actually present and operative in the life of Jesus, but rather that the moral *quality* of his will was Godlike (i. e., what we may *believe* to be the character of the transcendent God whose existence we *believe* in) and that the *function* discharged by the person of the historic Jesus in the lives of his followers is the divine or God-like function of saving them from sin and its evil consequences. But if we are entitled to evaluate the per-

sonality and life-work of Jesus as God-like, we are entitled to go further and draw some important deductions. If Christ is characteristically God-like, God is characteristically Christ-like; the Christ-like is the norm of the divine character and purpose. In other words, we have support here for the Christo-centric theological principle, according to which there is to be included in our view of God all that is deducible from the proposition that the spirit of Jesus is a revelation of what God is like, while there is to be excluded from it all that contradicts this view.* Thus far the most constructive of the Ritschlians have ventured to go, but no farther, because of their fear of the introduction of metaphysics into theology. But, we may ask, if God is Christ-like, i. e., if he has a Christ-like will, must he not be doing a Christ-like work for the salvation of men from sin? And yet nowhere do we find any satisfying evidence that God is doing this as Christ did it, unless we can say that God was doing it in and through Christ, and is doing it in and through the Christ-like in human life everywhere. And so, ultimately, if we are entitled to say that God is Christ-like, we are entitled to say that God was *in* Christ, reconciling the world unto himself.† In other words, the divinity of Christ was not merely "ethical," nor even "functional" alone; it was a real and "essential" divinity as well. This does not mean, of course, that we ascribe "deity" to Jesus of Nazareth. He was divine—uniquely divine, it would seem, for it was largely the difference in the degree of the presence of the divine *quality* in his personality and life that gave him his uniquely divine *function* in revelation and salvation—and God was in him; but this does not mean that Jesus was, or is, the God upon whom, as thoroughly human and a religious man, he himself was dependent in such a way as to be the true pattern for his fellowmen.

Before leaving this topic of the divine man, passing attention may be given to two or three special questions which are often asked in this connection. One of these is as to the pre-existence

* We are here anticipating theological theory to some extent, but we are not building any new conclusions with regard to the data of theology upon what is anticipated.

† A somewhat ambiguous approach to the position taken here and in the preceding paragraph is to be found in Herrmann's characterization of God as "the Power, greater than the world, which was with Christ."

of the personal being whom we have come to know as the Jesus of history. To this the answer seems to be that while God, who was manifested as immanent within the historic Jesus, must, of course, be thought of as having existed prior to the beginning of Jesus' earthly life, we have no positive basis for asserting the same of the personal spirit whom we know as Jesus. If we do not care to go so far as to deny it on grounds of the observable natural genesis of all human personality, we must remain on this point critically agnostic. The appeal to traditional belief gets us nowhere.

Another question is as to whether we may not believe that the present status of Jesus as the divine and "risen Christ" is such that in prayer and the sense of divine fellowship we are holding direct personal communication with him, and not simply with "God, the Father," or "the Holy Spirit." With reference to this, from the modern point of view two things may be said. In the first place, no one is able to show that the divine Being with whom he has religious communion is Jesus Christ, as distinguished from "the Father," or "the Holy Spirit," even though he may call this divine Being "Christ." In the second place, if we can have communion with "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (to use the Pauline expression), we have *at least* all the values that we could have from personal communion with the historic Jesus—except perhaps a purely sentimental value. Direct communication with Jesus under present conditions is not an imperative religious need. It would be a spiritual luxury, and it can be affirmed only as a personal "over-belief," impossible of verification by the methods of empirical theology—unless it can be done somewhat as the "spirit-controls" of mediums are claimed by some investigators of psychic phenomena to have established their identity. With regard to this second question, then, we also seem to find good reason for remaining critically agnostic.

Once more, the question is often asked in these days, whether we ought to expect Jesus to be equalled or transcended by anyone in the future history of the human race on earth. In reply we may point out at once that there is at least one respect in which Jesus must be expected to remain forever unique, viz., in the unique rôle which he played in the founding, once for all

time, of the specifically Christian experience of salvation. But we should cherish no prejudice against the possibility of the appearance of another spiritual personality equally great—or even greater, for that matter, unless, indeed, this is practically inconceivable. If it did occur, it would be a revelation of the divine to be profoundly grateful for; and it would seem to be equally desirable beforehand. But as to whether or not it will take place, who can say? No doubt the divine Reality would have been revealed as fully as it was in Jesus of Nazareth long before the beginning of our era, had there been a human being of equal native endowment who fulfilled equally well all the other conditions of the incoming of the divine power, and had the social environment been equally capable of receiving the revelation; and no doubt the same thing would happen again under the same conditions. The only necessary further qualification of this statement is that which should be made in view of the fact that revelation, as actual revealing, or presenting in such a way as to make new knowledge possible, is always relative to what was there before, as the actual illumination due to a new source of light is inversely proportional to the quantity of light preceding its appearance. But beyond these statements we must remain again critically agnostic. Practically speaking, however, it would seem that our chief need is not for the appearance of a greater spiritual leader than Jesus of Nazareth, but for the social propagation of the spirit of Jesus and the social application of his principles—in other words, for a modern social adaptation of what he himself called "the Kingdom of God."

CHAPTER III

Revelation in the Work of Christ

We shall now examine, as likely to furnish us with further empirical data for a scientific theology, the revelation of the divine in the work of atonement. We shall deal primarily and especially with the atoning work of the historic Jesus, whom we have evaluated and interpreted—partly in anticipation of what is to be said of his work—as divine.

It may be felt that what we are here undertaking to consider is properly a subject-matter for theological theory, rather than a datum. It is true enough that we shall have to postpone our discussion of certain aspects of the subject until we come to deal, under theological theory, with the relation of God to man. But we would maintain that all service to humanity such as that performed by the historic Jesus is primarily an empirical datum, rather than a topic for speculation, and that no theological "theory of the atonement" can be established, save upon the basis of an adequate knowledge and proper evaluation of empirical facts. But where the work of atonement is supposed to have been primarily a transcendent transaction, a change wrought in the transcendent God, or in his attitude toward men, it cannot be regarded as essentially a matter for empirical investigation. A preliminary part of our task will be therefore to clear the way for a scientific treatment of the work of atonement as a theological datum, by briefly criticizing the principal theories which have sought to gain plausibility for the notion that the work of Christ had its primary effect in the realm of the transcendent.

Most "theories of the atonement" have assumed that the "saving work of Christ" has primary reference to a future life, rather than to the present, that it does not immediately undertake to make available the divine power for deliverance from actual sinning, but rather to secure a divine judicial pardon

by virtue of which the sinner may be assured of escaping all the *post-mortem* penalties of his transgression. Moreover, they practically identify this atoning or saving work of Christ with his death. The problem then comes to be how to interpret the *death* of Christ so as to account for such a change in *God* as would provide for the possibility of the sinner's *pardon* and consequent escape from "*hell.*" No doubt the theories would have been very different, had the problem been, How has the *life* of Jesus, which culminated in his crucifixion, been instrumental toward such a change in *man* as brings about atonement (at-one-ment, *reconciliation*, unification between God and man and between man and man) and *salvation* (divine deliverance of man from evil, especially from sin)?

Let us first consider the interpretation of the death of Christ as a sacrifice for the sin of man, offered to propitiate an angry God. The early history of the idea is instructive. In the early days of the primitive church, the death of Jesus seems to have been thought of by the disciples for the most part simply as a monstrous crime—the crime of the murder of the one whom God had designed to be the Messiah, the promised deliverer and ruler of his people. As such, it could not permanently succeed; the purposes of God could not be more than temporarily defeated by the wickedness of men; but unless the people repented, the crime of the crucifixion would be severely punished on the return of the risen and exalted Messiah to judge and rule the world. It began to be felt, however, especially in the light of Isaiah LIII, interpreted as Messianic prediction, that the suffering of the innocent Servant of the Lord was surely divinely intended for some good reason, and would surely redound to the benefit of others. Moreover, incidentally the death of Christ was the necessary preliminary to the resurrection, of which the early church was firmly convinced, and which was regarded as an earnest of greater things to follow. It remained for Paul to develop the interpretation of the death as definitely sacrificial.

What Paul was especially concerned to find an explanation for, in view of the unquestioned doctrine of the overruling providence of God, was the unexpected fact of a *crucified Messiah*—a fact which had been to him, as it still was to many

other well-informed Jews, "a stumbling-block." But there were other problems for Paul to solve. What was the explanation of this fact of his own experience, that keeping the letter of the traditional law of God with regard to the sacrifices and other ceremonial matters had not brought him peace of mind, whereas the acceptance and public proclamation of the crucified Jesus as the Messiah had done so? (The primary explanation of this fact of experience, is, of course, psychological; but Paul was looking for an objective rather than a subjective explanation, for a theological and even christological rather than a psychological account of the matter.) Again there was the problem, emerging later, as to how to justify theoretically the leaving of Gentile converts to Christianity free from what would have been, practically considered, the intolerable burden of having to keep the presumably divinely-given Jewish law of sacrifices and other rites? By one happy thought Paul solved to his own satisfaction all three problems. The sacrifices of the Jewish law, it occurred to him, did not really propitiate God; they were but signs pointing forward to the death of the Messiah as the propitiatory offering for sin, bringing peace to the repentant sinner who accepted it as such, and rendering any further keeping of the law of sacrifices meaningless.

But Paul had difficulty with this conception, fruitful as it was. Under the old economy man, the offending party, took the initiative to secure reconciliation (atonement); it was he who provided the sacrificial offering which was to render an outraged and angry God propitious. But under the new economy it was God who himself provided the sacrificial offering which was supposed to propitiate himself! This could only mean God was already *propitious* enough, and always had been; that the real problem was not, and never had been, how to reconcile God to man, but how to reconcile man to God. And in the great Pauline Christian doctrine that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, we see the hopeless breakdown of the theory of the death of Christ as a propitiatory sacrifice or offering to God. It is not that the New Testament fact did not fulfil the Old Testament idea of sacrifice; it more than fulfilled it, it overflowed it! And yet, when the atoning work of Christ is spoken of as a sacrifice, naturally but un-

fortunately what has usually been meant has been the crude idea of the legalistic parts of the Old Testament, according to which if the sinner is to escape, an angry God must be propitiated by the death of an innocent victim! This notion, against which the greatest of the Old Testament prophets themselves protested, is already virtually overcome, although not always expressly repudiated, in the religion of the New Testament.

In the Epistle to the Hebrews another attempt is made to mediate between the old idea of propitiatory sacrifice and the facts of the new religion. Jesus is represented as the Priest who offers himself as the propitiatory sacrifice. But surely the true priest is the one who brings the people to God, not the shaman who claims to work behind the scenes some quasi-magical change in God for the benefit of credulous believers!

There were other analogies used by New Testament writers to throw light upon the crucifixion of the Messiah. Such, for example, was the shedding of blood for the ratification of the covenant, which came to be the symbolic interpretation attached to the last supper of Jesus with his disciples, in which the Master, with the acted parable of the bread and the cup, sought to bind his little band of followers more closely to each other and to the cause of the Kingdom, before he should be taken from them. Again, there was the striking but not very fruitful idea that the death of the testator is the indispensable condition of his will going into effect; and once more, the very appropriate analogy of a ransom paid to liberate prisoners from bondage. This last comparison, which like all analogies and parables, can be properly applied only within definite limits, was used by writers in post-apostolic times as a basis for inference as to the nature of the transcendent transaction in which it was supposed the atonement consisted. It was held that the person of Christ was paid over by God to Satan as a ransom for the liberation of sinners from their bondage to that evil spirit, but that Satan was not powerful enough to keep the divine Son, and so had to let him go. God had misled Satan by means of the human form of Jesus; but it was regarded as quite permissible for God to drive a sharp bargain with the devil, whose business it was to deceive others! And this was

the God who was extolled as worthy of absolute trust and adoration!

Less obviously absurd, perhaps, but still unacceptable from any rational modern point of view, were the later theories according to which "the atonement" was a primarily transcendent transaction, designed to make it possible, under certain conditions, to provide sinners with a pardon which would give them immunity from "the wrath to come." One of the most important of these theoretical constructions was Anselm's interpretation of the death of Christ as the payment of an infinite price to cancel the infinite debt incurred by man's sin against the infinite Being, a debt which would otherwise have involved the inevitable penalty of an imprisonment in hell of infinite duration. Among other objectionable features of its doctrine, this view assumes that as a debt may be paid by another than the one who incurred it, so the debt of guilt incurred by sin can be transferred arbitrarily from the individual who sinned to another, whereas any enlightened moral consciousness knows very well that guilt is inseparable from the sinful will which was the cause of the evil deed. (The alternatives here seem to be that either Christ did not die for all, in which case there has been the rankest conceivable instance of favoritism to some and wanton cruelty to others, or else the debt of all has been paid, so that in justice it must not be collected again—in other words, either a "limited atonement" or universalism.*

Similar criticisms may be made against the closely similar view that the death of Christ was the penal (rather than commercial) equivalent of the eternal death of all sinners (or, according to some, of the elect only). Even if it were the equivalent in suffering, it could not justly be penal without a transfer of guilt; and this we have seen to be in the nature of the case impossible.

The Grotian theory sought to avoid the objectionable features of the older views by representing the death of Christ not as an actual enduring of the full punishment of human sin, but as a mere expedient of the divine government, meant to impress the sinner with God's abhorrence of sin. But here the expedient

* For further criticisms of Anselm's doctrine see the preceding chapter.

becomes ineffective as soon as its real nature is understood, for then it appears that the suffering of Jesus was not really on account of man's sin, but because of the supposed exigencies of the divine government, which are not as such, properly speaking, a matter of human concern at all.

Once more, the theory that Jesus satisfied the righteousness of God with respect to human sin by presenting vicariously an adequate repentance for all human transgression rests upon the confused notion that a person's regret for another's sin is, or ever can be, the repentance which is the necessary condition of moral forgiveness. Like the older theories, it assumes that a wrong can be "made right" in some artificial way, before the person who committed it has actually come to *be* right in mind and will.

Let us now turn from these *theories* of the atonement, all of which view it as the reconciling of God to man by some obscure and artificial transcendent process and the providing thereby for pardon and escape from unending future punishment, and let us try to learn what sort of atoning and saving work was actually undertaken by the historic Jesus, and what has been and is being accomplished as a result of his self-sacrificing labors and the early death in which they culminated. And in doing so let us take note of the fact—and not be disconcerted by it—that the evangelical interest is rapidly coming to be centered in the securing of divine guidance and spiritual power for the winning of moral victory, rather than in the obtaining of pardon as a guarantee of safety in the life after death.

Jesus of Nazareth has so vivid a consciousness of the reality and goodness of God and of the value of man that he felt called to bring others—as many as possible—to share his point of view and experience. He knew at first hand what it was to love God with his whole heart, and his neighbor as himself; and, moved by holy love, he undertook to win his people to what was deepest and best in their own traditional ideals, as contained in the law and the prophets. It was his ambition to save men from evil and bring them to the greatest good. Especially was he concerned that they should enjoy an inner revelation of the divine, and be saved from sin and its evil consequences. He desired to bring men into fraternal relations

with each other, as well as into the filial relation toward God. In short, what he sought was at-one-ment, reconciliation of man with God, and at the same time, on the highest moral plane, the reconciliation of man with his brother-man. This being his ambition, it is self-evident that the sin of the world, and the evil consequences to which it was leading, lay as a heavy burden upon his heart. As the mother hates the sin which is ruining her beloved son, and is heavily burdened by it, so it was with Jesus as related to his people and to the great world beyond, all of whom he would have gathered into a great kingdom of God, a human brotherhood under the divine fatherhood.

To accomplish this aim he taught the principles of the morality and religion which he himself lived by. Purity and unselfish service, as made possible through surrender to, communion with and dependence upon the God of holy love—this was his message and this was his life. Thus in example as well as in teaching his function was that of the prophet, to bring revelation of the Divine to men. But he was more than prophet. He was priest as well. Not that he sought by sacerdotal ritual to work—or to seem to work—behind the scenes some magical change in God or in the attitude of God toward men. He did not feel called to reconcile God to the world in its sin. His priestly function was moral and rational. It was to change man rather than God, to win men to repentance and faith, and thereby to forgiveness and reconciliation—at-one-ment—with God.

But he was doomed to the disappointment of having to face the imminent fact of death while as yet there were practically no visible results of his efforts. This is the cup that he would have chosen not to have been required to drink. Religious and political leaders were openly hostile, the people fickle and unintelligent, and even the disciples timid and unreliable. But adhering consistently to his ideal, he scorned even the slight compromise which would have won for him continued life and opportunity for service. He remained faithful unto death, supported by his faith in God and in the ultimate success of his own divine mission to the world, all appearances to the contrary notwithstanding.

When we understand Jesus, and contemplate his personality and work, we must be won not only to admiration, but if we are true to our own best impulses, to devotion in active response to his appeal. And in being won to him we are brought into an essentially right relation to God and man. For it is not simply to him as an individual that we are won, but to him as the divine man, the revealer of the divine in human life, the revealer too of the divine potentialities of human nature and of every human life. Thus he saves, not simply by moral and religious teaching and example, but by revealing God. His work of atonement is primarily at-one-ment, spiritual unification with himself, with the divine as revealed in himself, with the divine in his work as well as in his person. His work of reconciliation is God's work; "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

This interpretation of the atoning, saving work of Christ as divine is not so much a theory as it is an appreciation and religious perception. From the standpoint of fundamental religion such work, as supremely worth while, is readily evaluated as divine. But even from the standpoint of experimental religion we may say the same thing, for Jesus himself was *saved from sin* through religious dependence—saved by way of prevention, it would seem, rather than by way of cure—and the quality which was promoted in Christ by his experimental religion, viz., his holy love, was the quality which led him to live and die for others, that they might be reconciled to God and to their fellowmen. Moreover, such reconciling work is what is promoted in us through dependence upon the God revealed in Christ. In the life and death of Jesus, then, in his activity and suffering, we see the divine—unselfishly loving man, working for his well-being, suffering in his affliction and burdened by his sin.

In this evaluation or apperception of the atoning work of Christ as divine, the actual work of God in and through him, we have gone about as far as we can in the consideration of this topic without passing over from the realm of empirical data into that of theory, except that we can go on to trace the empirical result of the atoning work of Christ in the Christian experience of salvation; and to this we now turn.

CHAPTER IV

Revelation in the Christian Experience of Salvation

"Salvation," or "redemption," is always, from the standpoint of experimental religion, deliverance from evil, actual or potential, through the divine agency. To have God, i. e., to be in such a relation to the divine that its power is being revealed and to be revealed continuously on one's behalf, is *virtually* to be saved, redeemed, even though the *actual* deliverance from evil may be a process extending over a lifetime. In an absolutely satisfactory experimental religion, to be "reconciled" to and "at one" with God, and so to "have God" in the sense just explained, will be to be prepared, or at least to be in a position to be thus ready, for whatever experiences the future may possibly bring.

Now it soon becomes manifest that no mere providing of one's self with external means of security, whether with or without the aid of religion, can provide one with this true preparedness for whatever the future may bring. The preparedness must be internal, spiritual, and essentially and fundamentally moral, a preparation in character and attitude of will and in access to an inexhaustible source of spiritual power. To be brought into such an attitude of will and into such a relationship to an absolutely dependable source of spiritual power is *virtually* to be saved. To meet thus the vicissitudes of life and of the future life, if there be one, with moral triumph, and to develop thereby the character which habitually experiences moral triumph, is *actually* to be saved (delivered from absolute evil). Of this actual experience of salvation, "reconciliation" or "atonement" is little more than the beginning.

In the light of what has been said of revelation in the person and work of Christ, the position may be taken that salvation consists in becoming essentially "Christlike" in character and work. This is the essentially *Christian* experience of salvation.

It is the making of the human spirit holy, in the critical sense of that term, through the immanent operation of the divine power. This divine Presence and Power, operating within human life and experience and producing the Christlike or holy human spirit, is called the "Holy Spirit." The Christian salvation is thus the Christian revelation—revelation of the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit. Further definition of the Holy Spirit and discussion of its relation to God and to Jesus Christ may be postponed until we come to treat of the idea of the "Trinity" under theological theory.

The preliminary phase of this Christian experience of salvation is, ordinarily at least, what may be called, to use an old phrase, "conviction of sin." Under the older evangelicalism this often meant being oppressed with the feeling that one was "under the curse of a broken law," and doomed to everlasting punishment by an angry God. As the modern mind has been revising its views of God and of sin and its punishment, the complaint has arisen that there is now little conviction of sin in connection with religious experience. This is doubtless due in part to the fact that the normal conviction of sin, from the best modern point of view, is rightly enough essentially different, intellectually, volitionally and emotionally, from that which formerly was the standard experience.

From the present point of view, then, normal conviction of sin may be said to be moral self-dissatisfaction, together with the more or less explicit sense of the need of at-one-ment with God and man. Reconciliation with God is sought, however, not for the sake of external pardon and future safety, but rather for the sake of being in harmony with the divine, and for the sake of moral power and triumph over sin. It is important to note, also, that this modern conviction of sin may be, and doubtless ought to be, social or corporate as well as individual. That is, it ought to include dissatisfaction with the society of which one is a member, for the evils which are traceable, not so much to one's own individual delinquency, as to that of the group with which one is associated. The judgment of moral disapproval passed upon the individual or corporate subject will, moreover, be accompanied normally by feelings of sorrow and shame, and by impulses toward a fundamentally different sort of life. Mod-

ern conviction of sin, then, is of this sort; and for religious cognition, once more, the whole experience is, as a revelation, the divine process of salvation in its preliminary phase, an operation of the Holy Spirit.

The transition-experience, in which the essentially right religious attitude for the sake of moral victory is consciously and definitely taken up, is *conversion*. The term itself means a turning or change from one attitude or course to another; but here it is used as meaning the definite and decisive beginning of an essentially Christian life, religiously and, as a consequence, morally. There is a normal emotional accompaniment of the experience, as well as certain preliminary intellectual conditions; but the essential and crucially important phase of the experience is the volitional. When conversion is from another religion, the intellectual element is generally prominent. When it takes place under social influence (as in a "revival"), emotional elements may be pronounced. But the conversion itself is essentially and primarily a *decision*, put into practice. The psychologist of religion is generally inclined to use the term "conversion" for only such religious experiences of transition as are highly emotional and are, as such, particularly interesting from the psychological point of view. But from the point of view of theology, genuine conversion is, as has been intimated, the experiential beginning of the recognizably Christian, or saved, or holy life; however emotional the experience, it is not Christian conversion until there has been the taking up of the Christian religious and moral attitude. Under favorable conditions of religious education there may be no outwardly very noticeable transition, nor any very memorable experience, psychologically speaking; but such features are only incidental anyway. The essential element is the having come to be a decided Christian, morally and religiously.

There are different forms of thought in which one may express the nature of this transition-experience, but one of the readiest and most practical is in terms of discipleship to Christ. When one begins affirmatively and decisively to respond to the essential appeal, moral and religious, of Jesus, i. e., when it becomes a matter of principle with him to respond to whatever practical meanings the personality and work of the historic

[illegible]

The main elements into which the genuine conversion experience may be analyzed are repentance and faith. And as genuine conversion is more fundamentally and essentially a volitional than an intellectual or emotional experience, so true repentance is essentially volitional, moral, rather than emotional, although normally it has its emotional accompaniments; and true faith is also essentially volitional, rather than intellectual, although normally it has its characteristic intellectual antecedents and sequel. Repentance is not mere regret, or sorrow for sin, but a decisive turning away from sin and from the sinful principle of life. Faith is the affirmative response of the will to God as revealed, i. e., to the appeal of the divine as presented in history (racial experience) or within the experience of the individual. There may be intellectual "faith" without true repentance, because there may be intellectual faith without true (saving) faith. And there may be emotional "repentance" before and without true faith, because there may be emotional repentance without true repentance. But it may be surmised that there can be no truly Christian repentance without the beginnings of Christian faith, as there can be no truly Christian faith without at least the beginnings of Christian repentance. Christian conversion is turning from sin to God, and turning to God in order to be turned effectually from sin; and, as phases of this experience, repentance or turning effectually from sin, and faith or turning effectually to God, are mutually involved and ultimately inseparable.*

This definite and overt beginning of the Christian attitude and way of willing as a new life is sometimes spoken of as "the new birth" or being "born again"; and viewed as such and as a manifestation of the divine within the human, i. e., of the Holy Spirit, it is with apparent appropriateness characterized as

* Here we seem to have the solution of the controversy as to whether repentance precedes faith or faith precedes repentance.

being "born of the Spirit," or as a divine process of "regeneration."

The normal accompaniment of the conversion-experience is the assurance of atonement, or reconciliation with God (and ultimately with man also), including a sense of forgiveness with reference to past sin (and a readiness to grant forgiveness to those who have sinned against one's self). The reconciliation with God is very commonly thought of as being "adopted" into a specially filial relationship with God, and being brought into a specially brotherly relation to fellow-Christians and indeed to all men. There is involved in the whole experience a consciousness of access to the divine power needed for the various experiences of the present life and whatever life to come there may be; in other words, there is all that is essential in what is called "the assurance of salvation." This phase of the experience is largely emotional, but belief is also influenced, and in the new relation toward God and the new appreciation of the divine and of the potentialities of the divine within the human there are at the same time a new motive and a new power for the maintenance of a high standard of personal morality and for co-operating in the work of atonement and salvation.

In going on to speak of the further realization of the essentially Christian experience of salvation, or, in other words, to trace the further operation of the Holy Spirit, or progress of the divine within the human, we may isolate, as phases of the subject, the continuation of the Christian life, the health of that life, and the growth of Christian character.

In traditional theology there was division of opinion and controversy as to whether, once the new divine life had been begun in a human soul, it was sure to be continued to the end of the present life and to issue ultimately in spiritual perfection. Some, choosing apriori processes and emphasizing religious considerations, upheld the affirmative, while the negative was supported mainly on moral and empirical grounds. Both sides tried to make use of the appeal to authoritative scriptures, and each side claimed greater practical advantages for its view than for its rival. The question was of course especially acute when salvation was thought of as mainly external, as having to do

ditions is, in the language of religion, "sanctification," and in religious cognition it is attributed to the Holy Spirit.

What in detail the religious or other conditions of sanctification are, will be discussed when we come to speak of the laws of empirical theology; but at this point we may consider the question of the validity and feasibility of the ideal of perfection in conduct and character. If we define complete morality of conduct as an achievement of will and of actual performance such as is equal to the highest possibility for the individual at the time, there still remain further questions as to this highest possibility. A distinction should be made between what *is* actually possible and what *would have been* possible at the time, if in the past the actions had been ideal, and if all opportunities that might have been utilized for gaining further knowledge and power for right action had actually been so utilized. It should be recognized, however, that the perfect outward realization of a perfectly good will would require, in many instances, a body perfectly responsive to such a will, a society perfectly responsive to the appeal of moral ideals, and other instruments perfectly fitted for the work to be done. And it should be noted further that a sense of moral incompleteness is not incompatible with the absence of a consciousness of guilt; for, however far one may have progressed in the moral life, a further ideal can be set for the future. Moreover, there may come increased insight into duty or an increased facility in action as the result of conscientious and persevering effort. In any case, no person ought to expect ever to reach a state in which the moral ideal has been so fully realized that no further progress will be possible. In view of such considerations, then, we would suggest that while no one should go so far as to deny that perfectly moral action is humanly possible, one ought to be very slow to claim that any acts of his own have been of this sort, while to speak of one's own character as morally perfect would be simply to make oneself ridiculous. On the one hand it is demonstrably true that doing what, under the existing limitations to action, the individual or society ought to do, is always possible; for if it were not in any way possible, there would be no guilt involved in not doing it. But on the other hand, no one is doing his full duty who is not doing what *would*

be his best with the help of the best available experimental religion, or, objectively stated, with the help of God, the Holy Spirit, revealed in his life. For on the basis of induction from religious experience, it may be asserted that the highest moral possibilities with the aid of the best experimental religion are, other things being equal, higher than the highest moral possibilities without it. With the morally uplifting revelation of the power of God, the Holy Spirit, developed as far as may be, it seems not too much to say that there is no present duty which cannot be done; that it is always possible to refuse to yield to recognized sin; that there is no temptation to the will which may not be conquered, and that there is no moral weakness which may not be progressively outgrown. This in the case of the individual; and for society, that there is no evil resting upon individual or corporate delinquency which may not also be finally uprooted and destroyed.

CHAPTER V

The Laws of Empirical Theology

In undertaking to formulate the laws of empirical theology we naturally presuppose both the general fact of revelation and particular facts of revelation, such as have been discussed in the preceding sections. In accepting such facts as empirical data for our science, we are taking the position, as indicated above, that in experimental religion at its best there is objectively valid religious perception. A more detailed exposition and defense of our position than we have offered above would lead us into the philosophy of religion, and so beyond the intended scope of the present volume.

In experimental religion, as in all experiential life, there are factors which are constant and others which are variable. Now the possibility of formulating empirical laws depends upon the discovery of constant relations in the midst of experienced variations. Among the constants involved in the present instance are nature with its laws, and certain aspects of the social environment and of human nature in general. The most important constant for theology, however, is the being and character of God. This is *the Constant* of empirical theological laws. The God whose existence, in the light of permanently successful religious experience, we are justified in assuming, has been defined above as the necessary objective Factor in religious experience, or the Object of active religious dependence, or the Source of salvation, i. e., of religious deliverance from evil. Other preliminary definitions, sufficient to mark off the religious Object from other objects are the following: the objective Source of that inner or spiritual preparedness for whatever the future may bring which is achieved through the right sort of religious adjustment; or again, the Power, not identical with our empirical selves, nor with the merely physical or merely human environment, which makes for righteousness in and through us according

as we relate ourselves to it in a certain discoverable way. This is the Reality which we have called the Holy Spirit. Beyond what is here involved we do not attempt to anticipate the results of theological theory; the character of God is what we have to investigate by our empirical procedure. We simply assume (in the scientifically tentative or empirical way) that God *has* character and will therefore be found to be dependable, when we have found out what we ought to depend upon the religious Object for. It is involved in what we have already said, that God is a constant Source of unfailing spiritual power. Of course to assert dependable character is not necessarily to deny free agency. Moreover, even with all the constants involved, we do not claim that theology is or ever can become an *exact* science. We may not be able to make an exact quantitative prediction of the results of experimental religion in any individual case, because of the many more or less unknown factors and at least one factor which is not completely predetermined. But the quality and direction characteristic of the Constant's action may be learned through empirical investigation.

Among the variables which tend to enter as factors into religious experience are certain phases of the social environment and of the individual training and outfit of ideas. Often these are constants relatively to some collections of religious data, and variables relatively to others. But the two most important variables, at least within the individual religious subject, are the quality and degree of responsiveness of nature or constitution, and the particular religious adjustment adopted. According to the variation from individual to individual, and from one time to another within the same individual, the results of the religious adjustment come quickly or slowly, and steadily or unsteadily. For example, the conditions of right religious adjustment being fulfilled and persisted in, there are some persons into whose lives there will be a gradually increasing incoming of the divine, and others in whose cases the incoming may be delayed for some time, and then, when the constitutional resistance has been overcome, it may manifest itself suddenly. However, the influence of the social religious environment may counteract the tendency to slowness and unsteadiness. But in general there would seem to be at least four possible types, due to con-

stitutional and environmental differences, viz. (1) that of quick but unsteady returns, (2) that of slow but steady returns, (3) that of quick and steady returns, and (4) that of slow and unsteady returns.

But the most important variable, especially for our present purpose, is the particular religious adjustment adopted by the individual. What we are interested in formulating is the *right* religious adjustment, i. e., the one which is at the same time critically justifiable and most effective for good. It is that adjustment to the religious Object which is necessary in order to realize those values for the sake of which individuals are and ought to be experimentally religious.

It may be worth while to point out the mistaken nature of the notion often entertained that the adjustment is primarily or even exclusively intellectual, i. e., that there is a law of religious experience the sole and sufficient human condition of which is correct religious opinion, or belief. Experience has long ago and time after time refuted this idea. To be sure, among the Jews in the days of primitive Christianity belief in Jesus as the Messiah seemed the condition of the Christian experience of salvation; but this was because, under the special circumstances of that people at that time, such a belief was the cue to a whole series of practical attitudes, which were the real condition of the religious experience. But for most people in "Christian" communities to-day, the doctrine that Jesus was the Messiah, or Christ, is a commonplace of traditional teaching and belief; it has practically no spiritual dynamic at all. The "right religious adjustment" must be sought primarily in the volitional rather than in the intellectual realm.

According to scientific empirical procedure, in seeking to determine the most effective intellectually justifiable religious adjustment, we should first go as far as we can in deducing theological hypotheses from the general presuppositions of theology and the special theological assumption of the existence of the religious Object (as defined in preliminary fashion), together with the general principle of the dependableness of that Object. We should then supplement the rather bare and abstract content of these hypotheses by having recourse to the scientific imagination, with its suggestions drawn from prescientific religious

experience. Finally the hypotheses thus constructed and speculatively elaborated should be used as working hypotheses and submitted to the test of practical experience, and in the light of the result classified as refuted or partially verified or completely verified. One would do well, however, definitely to compare his tentative results with those of others, paying special attention to testimonies of those most expert in securing successful religious adjustments.

But the process of the discovery of empirical laws may be greatly facilitated if we remember that in the religious life and experience of Jesus we find the supreme instance of success in experimental religion. We have already referred to the three main factors in Jesus' spiritual ministry as the presenting in his teaching and perhaps even more in the spirit discernible in his action, of (1) the true moral ideal for man, (2) the true religious ideal for man, and (3) the true revelation of God. Here we are concerned with all three of these, but especially with the second. The religious example of Jesus has its significance and value largely because of the chief end for the sake of which he was religious, viz., the promotion of moral efficiency in the interests of true human welfare. For Jesus has his transcendent greatness chiefly through the fact that he was at once a social and a religious genius; he discovered the true worth of man and the true way to God. It is true that in Jesus Christ as revelation of God, we have the objective Factor to which religious adjustment has to be made, not only better represented but better presented than elsewhere, and thus at the same time giving us a greater certainity of the divine Reality than we should otherwise have been able to have in systematically beginning our own religious experience. But it is the religious example of Jesus which we find especially illuminating at this point. It is not without ample justification that an experienced and well-known religious worker has expressed the first definite step toward the essentially Christian religious experience in the following declaration: "It is my purpose, with the help of God, to pay what it costs to be a sincere follower of Jesus Christ."

Assisted by these considerations we may analyze into the following chief elements what has been found to be at once the

most effective and, we would claim, a critically justifiable religious adjustment. First, then, there must be *concentration of attention*, with the aid of appropriate guiding ideas, upon the Object of religious dependence, identified with the Source of religious deliverance, with special reference to a thoroughly moral end which represents "the soul's sincere desire." There must also be a whole-hearted or *absolute self-surrender* to the divine Being, a consecration and abandon of one's self to be worked upon and through by the divine Power; and at the same time an *absolute dependence* upon God with reference to the thoroughly moral and sincerely desired end which is to be realized with the assistance of the divine Power. It is also important that there be a willed *responsiveness*, or readiness for active expression, as the divine Being may seem to guide and impel. This is the really essential thing in faith. It involves trusting God; it is venturing to go ahead with one's own part in the process, counting upon God for adequate grace and power for the fulfilment of the duty before us. It is well, to be sure, to cultivate the habit of waiting before God for the necessary "enduement with power"; but one should not be too dilatory any more than he should be too precipitate. And finally, there should be a steady *persistence* in the religious attitude just described. What is to be maintained here, then, is that the laws of empirical theology may be thrown into generalized form in a statement to the effect that, on condition of the above-described religious adjustment on man's part, God produces in human life and character certain moral experiences and qualities, with tendencies toward certain further consequences.

Before proceeding to a detailed statement of the principal theological laws, however, some further general observations may be recorded. It would seem that there may be, and are, within the limits of a "right religious adjustment," various differentiations of the faith attitude. The most important factor in this variation, perhaps, is the nature of the moral objective entertained. For example, the faith-attitude which seeks patience under affliction will be somewhat different from that which aims at power for service; and so where the objectives are firmness and gentleness respectively.

Again, it may be remarked, the laws of empirical theology, if they are to keep close to the facts, will frequently have to embody a sliding scale of results varying in proportion to the earnestness and persistence of the individual will with reference to religious adjustment. This is especially true of the growth of spiritual character under religious influence, and of the emotional phases of religious experience. But it is not always possible to formulate a uniformly sliding scale. The most notable exception is bound up with the fact that, so far as special enduement with power for service and for the overcoming of temptation is concerned, there are no results, comparatively speaking, until the consecration or self-surrender is at least intended to be total and absolute. Again, this condition having been fulfilled, the results tend to vary with attention and prayer, and so to fall into a sliding scale, but only up to a certain point; for there seems to be, in the case of persons of ordinary constitutions, a "law of diminishing returns" after a certain point has been reached. For example, for most people it is probably not true that two hours spent continuously in prayer will produce twice as much in the way of spiritual uplift and power as would result from a single hour thus occupied. On the other hand, there are persons of mystical temperament who seem to get very slight returns until they have persisted in their devotions far beyond what is customarily regarded as a reasonable time. And probably nobody is ever justified in saying that he has at any time exhausted the possibilities of spiritual uplift bound up with the right sort of experimental religion. There seems always, in spite of any law of diminishing returns, an inexhaustible possibility of more of the divine.

In undertaking to formulate the principal laws of empirical theology, we shall take them up in the following order:

I. Primary theological laws (or the laws of volitional experiences).
   1. The laws of elemental experiences.
   2. The laws of composite experiences.

II. Secondary theological laws.
   1. The laws of emotional experiences.
   2. The laws of intellectual experiences.
   3. The laws of physiological experiences.

4. The laws of social experiences.
   a. Ecclesiastical.
   b. General.

First, then, we turn to a consideration of the laws of theology in the *volitional* sphere, or, as we may call them, the *primary* theological laws. Under this division, in turn, we shall first consider the *laws of elemental experiences*, as distinguished from those of composite experiences—on the principle, as useful in scientific investigation as in military tactics, of "divide and conquer." These laws, which, like all theological laws, are in their psychological aspects laws of successful religious dependence, and in their epistemological aspect laws of divine revelation, may also be characterized more particularly as laws of special providence, this term being understood in the sense of special provision made for the supply of spiritual need in response to the right religious adjustment. Or again, they may be called laws of the answer to prayer, understanding by true petitionary prayer what we have described under the caption of "the right religious adjustment." This right religious adjustment is, of course, psychologically impossible save on the supposition that God is real and will respond favorably to those who diligently cultivate the relation; but it is never spiritually fruitless. There is no law of the answer to prayer for rain; nor does it seem possible to formulate any law of the answer to prayer for physical events, save as these may be the natural effect of the prayer's more immediate outcome in the petitioner's own life—or, *perhaps*, telepathically in the lives of others. For as yet it seems questionable whether there can even be any law of the answer to intercessory prayer, except in terms of the better equipment of the petitioner to be used in answering his own prayer; at any rate no such empirical law has yet been made out. With reference to prayer for the dead, it may be said that there seems no consideration against expressing in God's presence the soul's sincere desire for the spiritual welfare of the departed, any more than against praying for those still living, except that, because of our ignorance of the events in question, exaggerated ideas may be formed as to what can be accomplished by such prayers, and duties to the living be neglected in favor of the saying of "masses for the dead." On the other hand, the

expression of such a desire in the presence of God is all, be it little or much, that we can do for the dead. However, there is prayer which we know to be answered. With respect to the realization of right moral ends in and through one's own volitional life, there are such laws of the answer to prayer as make the prediction of results possible to a certain extent, even from the point of view of our limited experience and knowledge. The religious expert who is qualified to guide others to the most desirable religious experience always assumes ability thus to predict the future, whether on a consciously empirical basis, or on the traditional foundation of the "promises" (which are in the main themselves empirical generalizations). As taught on the basis of personal religious experience in the parables of the importunate widow and the midnight borrower, in due season he who has found the right religious adjustment will surely reap, if he faints not. He will find God revealed in the special providence of moral uplift, when he seeks thus "with all his heart."

It is sometimes suggested that the ideal religious attitude is so to trust God as to leave everything to his will, without trying to get anything by praying for it. We may express our desires to God, it is said, but we ought always to submit our wills to the will of God, until finally we simply trust God to do his will, which is always best, and ask for nothing. Thus the culmination of true prayer would be, as F. W. Robertson has put it, to "cease to pray altogether." But, without undertaking at this point to anticipate the constructions of theological theory, we can say that this highly speculative suggestion is surely wrong. Prayer is the soul and essence of experimental religion; and rather than ceasing to pray for the reason assigned, we should pray and critically observe the results, until we learn what true prevailing prayer is, and what may and what may not be looked for as a possible direct and immediate answer to prayer. In the end it will be borne in upon us by experience that what we have called the right religious adjustment is true prayer, and this will become a habitual attitude with us. And so, instead of praying until we "cease to pray," we shall have prayed until, as Paul puts it, we "pray without ceasing." (Paul's own experience is illuminating in this connection. Thrice

he "besought the Lord" that the "thorn in the flesh" might be taken away. The "thorn" remained; but the apostle learned that what he *could* be sure of obtaining in response to the right religious adjustment was "grace sufficient" to enable him to carry on his work effectively in spite of this and other handicaps.)

Among the elemental religious experiences of a volitional sort which may be predicted on the basis of knowledge of the theological law or laws of such experiences are the following: the receiving of moral power for repentance (as the turning away of the will from moral evil); the receiving of the same for moral aspiration; for self-control and courage (in so far as these are moral, as distinct from physiological); for victory over temptation (in so far as the problem is a moral rather than an intellectual one, such as it would be, if it were simply that of knowing the most effective means of putting an end to the tempting suggestion); and further, for faithful service to one's fellows and for the steadfast endurance of affliction and the overcoming of obstacles. And the laws of such elemental religious experiences may be stated in abbreviated form as follows: On condition of the right religious adjustment with reference to desired truly moral states of the will (such as repentance, moral aspiration, and the moral elements in self-control, courage, victory over temptation, faithful service and patient endurance), God the Holy Spirit produces the specific moral results desired.

But among the volitional theological laws there are also *laws of* certain *composite experiences*, of which the most important are, to use the traditional terms, "regeneration," "perseverance," "fulness of the Spirit," and "sanctification." Expressed in language more acceptable to modern ways of thinking, these experiences are respectively the divine beginning, continuation (or maintenance) and health of the essentially Christ-like or Christian life, and the divine development of essentially Christ-like or Christian character.

The theological law of regeneration, or of the genesis of the new or essentially Christian life may be formulated thus: On condition of the right religious adjustment with a view to being turned permanently from sin and to God and the Christian

way of life, God the Holy Spirit works primarily in the will and ultimately in the nature more generally the definite and manifest beginning of a new and specifically Christian spiritual life. This is the scientific law of regeneration, as opposed to the superstition of an essentially magical regeneration through the performance of a ritual act. It may be pointed out, and it is true enough, that in the turning of the human will from sin to God with a view to regeneration there are already present the beginnings of repentance and faith, and thus of regeneration itself. Fundamental religion would surmise that even this initial repentance and faith are the work of the divine Life in the soul of man; but even from the point of view of experimental religion as much may be admitted. The life is divinely regenerated, i. e., a life which is essentially Christian in principle definitely begins to be lived, through the immanent operation of the Holy Spirit, on condition of the individual's right religious adjustment being for the sake of making the repentance and faith thoroughgoing and permanent.

The law of perseverance, or of the continuation of the new or essentially Christian life may be formulated thus: On condition of the persistence of the right religious adjustment, God the Holy Spirit maintains in the individual the new and essentially Christian life. The true Christian is "kept by the power of God through faith."

The law of the health of the Christian life, or of what has been called "baptism in the Spirit," "the fulness of the Spirit," and "life abundant," is as follows: On condition of a sufficiently whole-hearted cultivation of the right religious adjustment, God the Holy Spirit so brings our action and experience under the divine control that we are enabled to do what we ought to do, and to have, subject to the conditions of the environment and of our constitution and past history, the normal accompaniment of emotional and intellectual experience.

The law of the development of essentially Christian character, or of the Christianizing of the Christian (one who has become Christian in principle), i. e., the law of what has been called "sanctification" and "growth in grace," is as follows: On condition of continued cultivation of the right religious adjustment, especially when it is so constant and whole-hearted as

to lead to the permanent health and healthful activity of the Christian life, and when the individual has adequate information for right conduct, God the Holy Spirit produces in him the Christ-like or Christian character, with its habitual readiness and equipment for right action. In other words, "what we consecrate, God will sanctify." This character-formation is no sudden process, but is here as everywhere the gradually accumulating deposit of conduct; and yet it need not be the slow process, with repeated disasters and setbacks, that it usually is. If the conditions of health of the new life are fulfilled, we need not worry about the continued existence of that life, nor should we—apart from a justifiable concern to be rightly guided in our activity—be anxious about the development of our spiritual stature.

In addition to these primary theological laws, which are concerned with the most immediate results of the right religious adjustment, i. e., with volitional religious experiences, we must set forth the theological laws of various other phases or effects of religious experience. These may be designated *secondary*, inasmuch as they depend upon the above-mentioned volitional religious experiences, and also in part upon other circumstances, such as special mental processes, the mental or physical constitution of the individual, and the character of the social environment.

First among the secondary theological laws we shall undertake to state the laws of *emotional* religious experiences. We shall deal with the feeling accompaniment of the conviction of sin and with those additional "fruits of the Spirit" which we may distinguish by the terms Christian peace, Christian joy and Christian love.

The theological law of the feeling of repentance, or of the feeling-accompaniment of the conviction of sin, may be stated as follows: On condition of (1) volitional repentance and (2) a sufficiently steady and continued contemplation of the contrast between one's own past life and action on the one hand, and the ideal principle of life, such as receives particular expression in the historic Jesus, on the other, God the Holy Spirit produces (as the accompaniment of intensified volitional repentance) the feeling of sorrow for sin. Moreover, not only within the

limits of the experience of the Christian but also as preliminary to the beginning of the Christian life, there occurs the experience, partly emotional, partly intellectual, and incipiently volitional, which is ordinarily called "the conviction of sin." Fundamental religion would evaluate this process as divine, and even experimental religion may surmise, on the basis of its congruity with the qualities of the regenerate life, that it also is the work of the Holy Spirit. In any case it may be pointed out that here as in the less debatable instance, a potent factor in producing the experience is self-measurement with "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

The theological law of the experience of Christian peace may be formulated thus: On condition of (1) the reconciliation or atonement with God which is involved in a truly Christian faith, and (2) a steady contemplation of the fact that one is at peace with God, there is produced within the individual by God the Holy Spirit, within such limits as may be set by constitutional and other conditions, a feeling of peace. This is what has been called "the peace of God," or "the peace which passeth understanding." It is important, practically speaking, to note that the rebel against the divine (whether the ideal Law or the ideal Being) is not in a position to have this particular feeling of peace, until the fact of peace has been established; and this can take place only if he surrenders absolutely to that divine authority against which he has been in rebellion. (But it is peace through victory, as well as through surrender; it is peace through victory over sin.) However, once the fact of peace has been established, the more one meditates upon the fact, the more (other conditions being the same) the feeling of peace will be experienced.

The theological law of Christian joy is to the effect that on condition of (1) success in the Christian life and in Christian work for others through the right religious adjustment, and (2) a contemplation of this success, especially in the lives of others, God the Holy Spirit produces the experience of Christian joy. This is the Pauline "joy in the Holy Ghost." Christian cheerfulness and Christian thankfulness are closely related to Christian joy, and are somewhat similarly conditioned.

The theological law of Christian love is somewhat complex

in its formulation. Christian love is the normal Christian relation of unselfish devotion toward God and man. As the right feeling toward God and man, it is conditioned upon right thinking about God and man, and especially upon right conduct toward God and man, i. e., upon thinking of God as perfect Father,* ever pursuing us with his tireless love, and thinking of one's fellowmen as brothers and as potentially divine in quality, and in acting in a filial way toward God and in a fraternal way toward men. In all this would be involved, of course, essential at-one-ment with God and man. The law, then, may be formulated as follows: On condition of right thought and action toward God and man, God the Holy Spirit produces in us ("sheds abroad in our hearts") the feeling of unselfish love toward God and man.

A second group of secondary theological laws, dependent upon primary or volitional religious experiences, and also upon other conditions, is made up of what we may call *intellectual* theological laws. Among these "other conditions" are included certain intellectual processes and in some instances some of the emotional religious experiences to which reference has just been made. We shall deal here with the theological laws of two intellectual, or largely intellectual experiences, viz., "divine guidance" and "assurance," or "the witness of the Spirit."

In undertaking to state the process of divine guidance in the form of a law we must repudiate the common notion that any insistent suggestion or impulse ensuing upon prayer or consecration is to be taken as an instance of God's leading. Such suggestions do not always tend toward results which we can evaluate as divine. But, as we have seen, on condition of the right religious adjustment God produces or promotes in us fundamentally right, or Christ-like, or Christian volition; and this divinely produced or divinely promoted right will inevitably influences the judgment as to what one ought or ought not to do. And so, granted adequate information as to the effects of possible courses of conduct, and correct thinking on the basis

* The apparent anticipation of theological theory in this designation of God is not a violation of our empirical procedure. We simply use the language of religion for the sake of psychological clearness, without using the ideas as a basis for inference.

of this adequate information, it can be said that, through the divinely influenced *will*, divine guidance is a fact. The law is as follows: On condition of the right religious adjustment, God the Holy Spirit produces a fundamentally right direction of the will, and this, together with adequate information and logical thinking, leads to right judgment as to the course which ought to be pursued. It must not be assumed, however, that in all action there is only one of the possible alternatives which can be right, or that divine guidance would always predetermine absolutely which one will be chosen from the several possible alternatives. As in the matter of Christian belief there is a neutral realm for opinions which are neither necessarily to be included nor necessarily to be excluded, so in the matter of Christian duty it may be that there are some projected actions which can neither be said to be required nor on the other hand to be necessarily excluded by the Christian principle. In such cases the divine guidance does not require the one choice rather than the other.

But what we have said fails to give a complete statement of what God does, in and through experimental religion, for the guidance of the individual. Since good character is favorable to intellectual progress, and so to correct information, and since the right religious adjustment is favorable to good character, there is basis for a further law of divine guidance in this more fundamental and far-reaching way.

The theological law of religious assurance has to do with experimental assurance of God and of reconciliation, rather than with the reasoned assurance by means of which this may be partially anticipated or supported. It may be stated as follows: On condition of the right religious adjustment so persisted in as to lead to the characteristic Christian experiences of "regeneration" and "fulness of the Spirit," and consequently in some measure to the Christian feelings of peace, joy and love, God enables us, through an intuition which naturally arises out of our religious experience, to "feel sure" that he is real and that we are reconciled to him. This is "the witness of the Spirit"—the Holy Spirit "bearing witness with our spirits that we are the sons of God." The "intuition," it may be remarked, is one which seems well able to stand the test of fair criticism.

Thus experimental assurance is the reward of fulfilling the conditions of a deeply vital religious experience.

A third class of secondary theological laws is the *physiological.* Here the experiences are not only dependent (at least ordinarily) upon the primary or volitional religious experiences, and closely associated with the emotional religious experiences, especially those of peace, cheerfulness and joy; they are also conspicuously dependent upon constitutional and general physiological conditions. Reference is made, of course, to the effects of religious experience upon the human body. In the earlier and less critical days of experimental religion it was customary to interpret various physiological effects of such highly emotional experiences as were common in religious circles as being the direct and evidential products of the divine action. But these effects have often been so valueless, judged from a spiritual point of view, that it has come to be intuitively felt that they are not so much a revelation of divine power as they are a manifestation of human weakness. They are now regarded as mere surplus-effects or by-products of religious emotion, coupled with the influence of suggestion; ordinarily, the divine direction is not discernible in them at all. Indeed, even Paul, who recognized that they had originated in a religious experience which was fundamentally divine, and who consented accordingly to speak of them as being, at least under some conditions, "gifts of the Spirit," spoke disparagingly of such phenomena as the much-coveted "speaking with tongues," and laid down the principle that God is not to be regarded as the author of disorder and confusion. But there seems to be at least one physiological phenomenon related to religious experience which can be reduced to law, viz., the phenomenon sometimes spoken of as "divine healing." What is meant here is not so much mere "mental healing" or "faith healing," when dependent upon mere suggestion, without any vital religious experience; but rather those beneficial physiological effects of normal religious consciousness which amount in some instances to the cure of pronounced bodily ills. Even here, however, a certain responsiveness of nervous constitution seems to be a necessary condition of any very conspicuous effects. The law may be stated thus: On condition of an adequate cultivation of the right

religious adjustment and its normal consequences in will and feeling and thought, the indwelling divine Life, or Holy Spirit, tends to bring even the life of the body into a mere normal and healthful condition, and where certain physiological conditions are fulfilled, even to cure certain species of bodily ills.

One other class of secondary theological laws may be mentioned, viz., the *social*, or sociological. These are of two sorts, those which formulate the effects of the right sort of religious experience upon the life and character of the religious community itself, and those which formulate the effects upon society in general or the world at large. The *ecclesiastical* social laws of theology can be formulated readily on the basis of the above individualistic formulations, the only difference being that instead of being in terms of the individual they will be in terms of the church—meaning by "church" the community unified on the basis of vital religious experience shared in common. Thus one might formulate the law of special providence in the life of the church, or of answer to the prayer of the church, laws of the genesis of a truly spiritual social life (or of the true church), and of the continuation and health of that life, and of the development of a Christian social character in the church. There might also be formulated laws of the production of the Christian feelings in the religious meeting and within the religious community. Here account would have to be taken of the Christian activities of the church and its consequent spiritual and even economic well-being, as conditions of the "peace," "joy" and "love" experienced within the church.

But among the most important of the ecclesiastical-social laws of theology are the law of the divine guidance of the church and the law of the (divinely given) assurance of being a true church. The former may be put thus: On condition of such a cultivation of the right religious adjustment in the church-meeting that the individual members are brought by the Holy Spirit into a Christian state of willingness to do what is eternally right and for the greatest good of mankind, they will in this way have been brought by the divine Spirit, other conditions being equal, into the best possible frame of mind for coming to a correct decision as to what they ought to do. The law of ecclesiastical assurance would be to the effect that when a

church, through persisting as a church in the right religious adjustment, is brought by the Holy Spirit into the normal Christian condition of health and efficiency, it will tend to be sufficiently assured that it is essentially Christian in character, or in other words, that is it one of the true churches of God, or of Jesus Christ.

The more *general* social laws of empirical theology undertake to formulate, and to refer to the operation of God, the processes of making right or "Christian" the general community life, local, national, and international, at least in so far as these processes are traceable ultimately to what takes place on condition of the right religious adjustment on the part of individuals and churches. The data to be formulated into these general social laws of theology are those of the "leavening influence" of the "kingdom of God" in the world—an influence which is to go on, it is to be hoped, "until all is leavened," or, in other words, until "the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of God and of his Christ." The lines of causal connection here are very complex, of course, the social progress being in some instances immediately traceable to religious missions, while in some other cases it is conditioned upon public opinion which is the effect, but only remotely, of vital experimental religion. Indeed, it must be said that if we are interested in anything beyond the most general and abstract statements, we shall find the formulation of these laws a very complicated and difficult problem. The process of the Christianization of communities, nations, and the world, is only being worked out; and so what we are likely to find out is that most of what the empirical theologian can find at this point is working-hypothesis, rather than fully verified law. Something, however, in the direction of theological laws of the redemption or Christianization of the local community ought to be possible. They would be primarily laws of community "regeneration," of the preservation and health of the community spiritual life, and of the development of a Christian community-character.

PART III

THEOLOGICAL THEORY

CHAPTER I

The Moral Attributes of God and the Relation of God to Man

In theology as an empirical science, theory has to do mainly with the *a posteriori* definition of God. Our initial minimum definition of God, it will be recalled, was sufficient only to mark off the subject-matter of our empirical investigation. Being based upon experiential although pre-scientific awareness of the existence and, in a very general way, the nature of the religious Object, this initial definition made it possible for us to select the empirical data of theology, and to discover their laws. Upon these laws we are now to base our conclusions as to the attributes and relations of the divine Being.

Our procedure is thus the reverse of that of deductive dogmatic theology, which starts with the concept of perfect Being and undertakes to analyze this concept and deduce conclusions, not only as to the existence, attributes and relations of God, but even as to what religious experience ought to be, thus enabling the theologian to proceed with his speculations, unembarrassed by any dependence upon the facts of religious experience. His reward is to be able to say what a God would be, or might be. Ours will be to discover what God is.

In undertaking thus to set forth, on the basis of religious experience, the main elements of theological theory, it will be well at the outset to refer once more and in some detail to the method, or methods, of making the transition from empirical laws to theoretical construction. In general it may be said that there are three more or less different ways of determining and critically justifying the theoretical part of empirical science. We shall consider each of these in turn with reference to our contemplated transition to theological theory.

As a first method, then, we may begin with our "intuitions" as to the reality in question, i. e., with those unreasoned certi-

tudes which are firmly rooted in immediate experience, treating them critically and even sceptically, deducing hypotheses from them, refuting them in the light of experience where this is possible, but otherwise letting them stand for what they still seem to be worth. On the basis of religious experience at what we feel to be, or have found to be, its best, there is an intuitive assurance that the Object of religious dependence is absolutely sufficient for our absolutely imperative needs. It is felt that God most assuredly is all that man needs the Object of his dependence to be, if there is to be maintained in his life that "best" type of experimental religion; that there is a Being, or Power, great enough and favorable enough to man to enable the one rightly adjusted thereto to be prepared for whatever situation he may have to face. Or, stated more concretely, in apprehending the divine, as manifested in the spirit of the historic Jesus and in the truly "Christlike" everywhere, we are identifying the divine with certain qualities, some of which depend upon this absolute sufficiency of an Object of religious dependence to enable one to be prepared in spirit for whatever he may have to experience. From this point of view our development of the theoretical part of our theology would consist in a detailed deductive elaboration of what is involved in this unrefuted and highly defensible intuition of the presence of the divine within the human. Ultimately this method would lead us to essentially the same conclusions as would result from the "Christocentric" method, which deduces the moral character and relations of God from the assumption or postulate of the divine Christlikeness. But employed in the way we have just suggested, as the elaboration of what is involved in a carefully criticized intuition, or empirical certitude, the Christocentric principle would be relieved in large part of the dogmatism which attaches to it in its ordinary form. It would be based upon religious perception, the cognition involved in a universally valid and presumably universally accessible religious experience, rather than being a dogmatic assumption, for which no claim is made that it is valid, save from the point of view of, and for, an essentially subjective "Christian consciousness."

As a second way of proceeding to determine and critically *justify* the contents of the theoretical part of theology as an

empirical science, there is the method of beginning, not with the religious man's certainties, but with his needs. Taking as a fundamental working hypothesis the practically necessary postulate that God is absolutely sufficient, absolutely dependable with reference to man's religious needs, and testing and progressively verifying in practical religious life the minor hypotheses logically involved in this fundamental supposition, one would find growing up a body of doctrine concerning God, of which he was practically certain, i. e., certain enough to keep on acting upon it with steady or even increasing satisfaction, intellectual as well as practical. Or, in other words, being convinced of the imperative moral necessity of a certain sort of experimental religion, and therefore of the practical necessity of believing at least that minimum of doctrine which is necessary to enable him to keep up the attitude toward God characteristic of this religion, and finding, moreover, in the light of experience, that this is possible with increasing satisfaction, he gains practical certainty of the *essentials* of theological theory.

But there is a third procedure which is more characteristic of scientific method, perhaps, than either of those just described. This is the framing, with the help of the scientific imagination, of a theory as to the nature of the constant objective Factor in religious experience in such a way as to account for the laws of empirical theology. This procedure rests upon the principle that we can learn, to a certain extent, what things and persons are, beyond what they are immediately perceived to be, by observing what they do. The religious Object, whatever else it may be, must be absolutely sufficient to produce, in response to the right religious adjustment on man's part, the experience of adequate salvation, or deliverance from evil, which man not only needs, but which, when he fulfills certain possible conditions, he is always ultimately enabled to experience. In other words, God must be great enough and favorable enough to man to enable the person who finds the right religious adjustment to meet without moral failure or any absolute disaster whatever he may be called upon to face.

What we propose to do here is to make use of all three of these procedures, using each as a check upon and supplement to the others. Thus our method, in undertaking to be empirically

scientific, is able to do full justice to both the Christocentric and the pragmatic procedures.*

In the light of what has already been said it will appear that the one fundamental attribute of God, from the point of view of experimental religion and empirical theology, is *absoluteness.* This term, it will be evident, is to be interpreted in a pragmatic and empirical sense, as meaning absolute satisfactoriness as Object of religious dependence, absolute sufficiency for man's religious needs. In religious experience at its best, this is intuitively certain, and this empirical certitude is such as will stand the test of further practice and rational criticism. It is also absolutely imperative, the indispensable minimum from a practical point of view. And finally, that pragmatic absoluteness is true of the Object of religious dependence which is the ultimate Source of religious deliverance is the most obvious and satisfactory theory to account for the facts of religious experience at its best, as formulated in the laws of empirical theology. However we might be able to support and supplement our theory, if we were to undertake an exhaustive description of the religious Object from the point of view of fundamental religion, we are already in a position to define God as *the Absolute of experimental religion.*

We shall now apply this conception of the pragmatic absoluteness or absolute sufficiency of the religious Object in connection with questions as to the character, or moral attributes, of God. Since God, on practical religious grounds *must be,* and so far as fair rational criticism is concerned, *may be,* and in religion at its best is *found to be* absolutely sufficient for man's religious needs, we are entitled to affirm, in view of what man's needs are, that the character of God is morally ideal and, relatively to our practical religious needs, perfect. This should not be interpreted as meaning that there is no progress in the life of God, that there is for God himself no moral ideal, or that the activity involved in the realization of his ideals means nothing for what he is and is becoming. What it does mean is that God's character, or will, is always all that it ought to be, and is never what

* Of course, for theology, as for any other descriptive science, the final intellectual test of theory will be found in metaphysics. For further discussion of this point, see the appendix to this volume.

it ought not to be. Nothing less than this would be adequate in the Object of religious dependence; nothing less would constitute an absolutely trustworthy Being, or one worthy of absolute reverence and worship.

This moral absoluteness of God is analyzable into the "immanent" attributes of holiness and love, to which correspond the "transitive" attributes (i. e., qualities expressing relations to others) of justice and mercy, or righteousness and grace. Holiness and justice, or righteousness, stand for the severer aspect, and love and mercy, or grace, for the gentler aspect of moral perfection. These pairs of attributes have been represented sometimes as so antithetical to each other that the greatest of all problems is supposed to be the devising of some way whereby both the holiness and the love, both the justice and the mercy of God might be adequately expressed in dealing with sinful man. But there is in reality no conflict. Perfect holiness includes love, and perfect love is holy. God would not be dealing justly with the sinner, if he refused to be merciful to him; nor would it be true mercy to grant an unjust forgiveness, or indulgence.

This absolute moral sufficiency of the Object of religious dependence is summed up in the pictorial language of religion in the expressions, "God, the Father" and "your Father in heaven, who is perfect." The term "Father," as applied to God, like the term "King," is more or less metaphorical, and the failure to take this sufficiently into account has been responsible in part for controversy as to whether the "fatherhood of God" is to be taken as universal or restricted in its scope. Is God the Father of all men, or only of the "regenerate," who have come into a definitely and consciously filial relation to him? Let us get beyond figures of speech to literal views of actual relationships. In view of the perfect love of God, we may be assured of this much at least, viz., that he is *fatherly* toward all. Indeed, from the point of view of fundamental religion there is ground for surmising that God is even more intimately related to human beings than an earthly father to his children—that the life of God is "nearer to us than breathing," indwelling the lives of all men and impelling them toward the true ideal. But, be that as it may, it is im-

portant to note that while God is fatherly toward all, not all are filial toward him. The "divine fatherhood" can be adequately experienced only by those who have learned to reciprocate the divine love, who have received "the spirit of adoption," whereby we call God "Father," and so become experientially "sons of God." And in the work of bringing men into this filial relationship the most invaluable service has been rendered by him who is, by general consent, *the* Son of God. He has succeeded in communicating in considerable measure to his followers his filial consciousness of God as the "perfect Father." Indeed, to one who has come at all fully under the influence of Jesus, God is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," perfect from the point of view of the moral ideal and the religious need and experience of Jesus himself, or, in other words, of humanity at its individual best. Ultimately, we must have a perfect God, or we can have no God at all. And it is significant that such a man as Jesus was did not have to become an atheist, but was assured not only of the existence, but also of the entire adequacy of God.

When we go on to inquire into the practical significance for us of this moral perfection of God, we find that it necessarily involves, to begin with, *opportunity*. Even in human relations justice is coming to be defined in terms of a fair opportunity, and in the relation of God to man it can mean no less. God, as perfectly holy and just, must give every individual a fair opportunity of ultimately realizing the true ideal. As perfect in love and mercy, he must give further opportunity even to those who have not made the best use of their original opportunity. This will mean the presence of external conditions which can be reacted to, either as stimulating obstacles or as helpful instruments; it will also mean genuine free agency on man's part, without which there would be no opportunity worthy of the name. This idea of "a fair deal" from God for every man will also involve that any judgment God may pass upon man will be according to truth and justice; that all will have ample opportunity for repentance and forgiveness, and even that God will have taken the initiative to bring about reconciliation with man; and finally, that provision of adequate power will be made *to* enable everyone who is really in earnest about it to maintain

steady progress toward the perfect ideal. Let us look further into some of these aspects of the relation of God to men.

It is important to dwell upon the consideration that bound up with the justice of God is the moral freedom of man. Here we have confirmation on grounds, ultimately, of religious experience, of what, on grounds of the moral consciousness, we included among the presuppositions of theology. And these two fundamental and adequately established convictions—viz., that God is perfectly just and that man is morally free, logically determine the position to be taken with regard to the traditional doctrines of predestination and election. It has been held by many that the final destiny of each individual has been fixed by an eternal decree of God, comparatively few being among those chosen—quite arbitrarily, it would seem—to be saved by the irresistible grace of God from the everlasting torture to which all others will be consigned, this eternal suffering being the supposedly just penalty of the sin from which they never could have been saved, since it was not the purpose of God, although it was in his power, to grant them regenerating grace! According to many adherents of the doctrine, no provision was made for any but the comparatively few elect in the vicarious and supposedly expiatory atoning work of Christ. Such a course on the part of God we should obviously have to regard as not only unmerciful but unjust; it would be the action of a fiend! In our recognition of the divine in Christ and the "Christlike," and in our sufficiently critical intuitive and practical certainty of the moral sufficiency of God as Object of religious dependence and worship, we know that this once prevalent view of God is a gross caricature.

There is, however, a divine predestination which can be inferred from the moral perfection of God, viz, his *conditional* predestination of *all* persons to be "conformed to the image of his Son"—if they can be induced to come, of their own free will, into the filial relation, the right religious adjustment, to "the Father." God's *choice* would exclude none from the benefits of his grace. He would "have all to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth." The government of the universe is not an arbitrary and cruel despotism, but more akin to a constitutional monarchy: the individual has the privilege

of electing God to be his monarch; and the race, if it chooses, can have this world transformed into the kingdom of God. There does seem to be a divine election of particular individuals and peoples to have the privilege and corresponding responsibility of performing special services to their fellows; but there is nothing in this to conflict with the justice and love of God. Indeed it is without doubt the sort of election that God would bestow upon all individuals and peoples, were they but alert to their opportunities.

Included also in the perfectly moral relation of God to men is his judgment of the acts and moral character of men. His judgment is always fair and true. He never justifies the unjust, or any one whose will is not at the time essentially right. He neither imputes sin to the sinless, nor the righteousness of the righteous to the unrighteous; any such judgment would be untrue and immoral. Moreover, the phrase, "after death, the judgment," does not convey the whole truth. Rather is it to be believed that every day is a day of judgment—a day in which God judges the individual according to his true knowledge of what that individual really is. He whose will is not essentially right, up to the limit of his possible light, is "condemned already" in the just judgment of God—as he would be in the judgment of any thoroughly moral person who knew what manner of man he was. No doubt every day the "books are opened"—the books of individual character—and the living are being judged out of those things which covert thoughts and cherished desires as well as overt words and actions have been writing day by day in those books.

And yet, granting all this, it remains that the judgment passed upon man by the God of holy love is not, in its primary intention, an appraisal of guilt with a view to retribution, but something more akin to diagnosis with a view to effecting a cure. God is not so much the Great Judge as he is "the Great Physician."

So then, in his relation to men, God is not to be thought of solely, or even chiefly, as constitutional Sovereign and Judge, but as Redeemer and Savior, or, to use more unconventional language, as Friend and Helper. God sent his own Son into the *world for* its salvation, we are told. God has indeed from the be-

ginning of the race been causing his divine Word, or revealing Presence, "the Light which lighteth every man," to come into the lives of men; and by virtue of the "fulness" of this divine spirit of truth and righteousness and love in the Man of Nazareth, God sent him—not from some "pre-existent" state in "heaven," so far as we know, but from the village home and carpenter-shop—to do his redemptive, his atoning and saving work in the world. This work, as we have seen, was a work of self-sacrificing love, and "hereby perceive we the love of God." The relation of God the Father to Jesus, his well-beloved Son, is not difficult to make out. Jesus was called upon to endure much undeserved suffering; but it was nothing but natural that this should have happened, as incidental to the sort of work he set himself to do in the situation as it then existed. Moreover, it is a justifiable conclusion that God must have been as satisfied with the obedience of his "Suffering Servant" and Son as he was dissatisfied with the disobedience of the sinful. But just here many interpreters have been misled into supposing that God is satisfied with the undeserved vicarious suffering of Jesus *as a substitute* for the punishment which the disobedience of others deserves. Obviously this is mere confusion of thought. As Schleiermacher puts it, "The sufferings of Christ were vicarious, but they do not make satisfaction; the obedience of Christ made satisfaction, but it was not vicarious." On the contrary, viewing, as we have suggested, the whole atoning, redeeming work of Jesus as our best individual revelation of what God is doing and seeking to do for man, we are led to infer that God (who, as the Holy Spirit, was in Christ and is in the Christlike, reconciling the world unto himself) loves the sinner while hating his sin, and is in some deep sense burdened by it. The unselfish love and self-devotion of Jesus to the redemption of the world from sin and its evil consequences, and what he suffered on behalf of those whom he sought to help, and even at the hands of some of them, give us a glimpse into what is going on constantly in the life of God.

In the redeeming work of Jesus we have the supreme illustration of "prevenient grace." God takes the initiative toward reconciliation with men who have been alienated from him, their best Friend, by *their own* repeated acts of disobedience.

The normal effect of this revelation of the love of God, when it is duly considered, is to bring the sinner to repentance and the desire for forgiveness. Moreover, even man's response to the divine appeal, as a definite awakening of the divine life within the soul of man, may very well be interpreted as achieved by means of the "assisting grace" of God, even as, on the other hand, there never is on God's part any "effectual calling" of man to repentance and faith which is not made effectual by an ultimately free response of the human will.

When thus under the divine influence man freely and wholeheartedly responds in repentance and faith to the moral and religious appeal of the divine as revealed in Christ and the Christlike, he fulfills the indispensable condition of receiving God's forgiveness of his past sin. Jesus could declare God's forgiveness of sin, and so can anyone who is able to discern the marks of true repentance, and who understands that in genuine repentance the will is so turned from the sin that it is not right to impute to the person at present the moral evil which he once indulged in, but which is not now characteristic of his will. By repenting he has not *earned* forgiveness; repentance alone does not make the wrong entirely right; it does not make objective amends for injury done. Forgiveness is still an *act of grace* on the part of the one who forgives, thereby refusing to let the past sin be a barrier to present fellowship. And yet the sincerely repentant ought to be granted forgiveness; to withhold it would be wrong.

It will thus be seen that no sin is unpardonable, once it is repented of; and yet all sin, so long as it is not turned away from, is unforgiveable. Failure to repent, persistent refusal to turn from sin, is sin against the manifestation of the divine Life within the human, i. e., against the Holy Spirit; and in the nature of the case, as long as it lasts it makes genuine forgiveness morally impossible. Indeed, strictly speaking, one may go farther and say that all sin is, as such, unforgiveable. And yet the one who has been sinful fulfills the condition of forgiveness when at heart he turns from his sin. The sinner is rightly urged to come, "just as he is," to God, without delaying to make himself any better in the effort to *earn* forgiveness; but when he does turn to God *in* order to be turned from sin, he is not just as he *was* when he

was sinning. Indeed he has become incipiently and in will "a new man"; and it is only as such that there can be between him and the one against whom he has sinned any reconciliation or forgiveness worthy of the name. Until this has taken place, God can only be graciously *ready to forgive* whenever man shall have fulfilled the necessary moral condition.

God's forgiveness of the converted sinner, translated into forensic terms, is spoken of as justification. Like the enlightened human judge, who sees that the true function of justice is not fulfilled in the mere dealing out of a prescribed retribution for the sake of upholding an abstract law, but that true justice requires a sympathetic understanding of the moral condition of the person concerned, and an intelligent adaptation of means to his future well-being, so the divine Judge, seeing that he who has turned to God in order to be turned from sin is now essentially right so far as the attitude of his will is concerned, judges accordingly. Thus God can be just and the justifier of him who has been unjust, simply because the true penitent is no longer, at heart, unjust; his former trespasses cannot be justly imputed to his present self.

This is not "justification by works," if by works we mean the perfunctory performance of external acts. Neither is it "justification by faith," if by "faith" we mean intellectual assent to doctrinal teaching. It is justification by right decision, justification by the good will. But this good will is involved and *initially* expressed in true or "Christian" faith, which is the turning to God in order to be turned from sin. And it is also involved and finds *ultimate* expression in true or Christian works, i. e., in right conduct toward God and man. The human observer who generally "looks upon the outward appearance," and not "upon the heart," must ordinarily wait for the fruitage of good works before he can judge the will to be moral; but in true faith the discerning Judge can discover the moral will, as it were, in the germ, so that, anticipating its further expression, he is in a position to justify the individual in view of his faith. Thus God's justification of man is not a "white-washing" process; it is simply treating the repentant man as being what he essentially is. Even if we grant that the morally deadening influence of sinful conduct tends to make a theoretically

adequate emotional realization of the evil of sin temporarily impossible to the sinner, it is nevertheless possible, surely, for the sinner to repent *as fully as he can!* And this it is which a just God requires of him as the condition of justification.

Two objections, seemingly antithetical to each other, are likely to be urged against this interpretation of forgiveness and justification. On the one hand it will be said that this makes it too easy to gain forgiveness, since all the greatest mischief-maker has to do, in order to be fully forgiven, is to repent, while the evils he has initiated may still be sending other lives to destruction. On the other hand it will be objected that the above interpretation would make it very difficult for any scrupulous person to gain a satisfactory assurance of forgiveness, since its necessary condition would seem to be the achieving and persistent maintenance of an attitude of perfect repentance. The answer to these objections is found in a better understanding of what is involved in God's forgiveness of man and the satisfaction of God with reference to human sin. God's forgiveness is not a mere legal pardon, remitting a future external penalty. It is reconciliation, at-one-ment, restoration of moral fellowship; and, so interpreted, there is no reason why we should either expect or desire more of it than, with the help of God the Holy Spirit, we fulfil the conditions of receiving. And we ought not to want to be misled by having more assurance, either as to our present relation to God, or as to our future destiny, than the facts themselves are sufficient to warrant.

But it is one thing to be forgiven, reconciled to God, on condition of our repentance; it is quite another thing for God to be completely satisfied with respect to our past sin. So far as what is now any longer possible at the moment is concerned, God is satisfied with a sincere turning away and intention to turn away forever from sin. But this is not all that the satisfaction of the divine righteousness can mean. What we mean is not a supposed satisfaction of God in the suffering and death of his Son. No doubt he was satisfied with the moral attitude of Jesus in being willing to suffer and, if necessary, to die in the fulfilment of his duty to his fellowmen. And no doubt, on the other hand, he was profoundly dissatisfied with the suffering and death of his Son, as the evil doing of sinful men. Indeed it is incredible that

a morally perfect God should ever be satisfied that this sin, or any other, should ever have existed. But what we have reference to particularly is such further satisfaction of God's righteous judgment and will as is possible, beyond the satisfaction he has in the repentance of the sinner. God will be increasingly satisfied as sin and its evil consequences are progressively destroyed, and individuals and human society saved therefrom. If, then, God is to be satisfied as completely as is any longer possible, now that sin has actually been committed, it will be necessary for every one who can do anything toward the destruction of sin and the salvation of man to do all that it is in his power to do. God himself must undertake to do all he can toward this end; and he can only have anything like complete satisfaction as he anticipates a successful outcome of his activity. And the repentant sinner, for the further satisfaction of God's righteousness (or for the satisfaction of his own or any other righteous judgment and will, for that matter), must also undertake to do whatever he can for the counteracting of the evil introduced by his own past sinful life, and for the destruction of sin and evil in the world generally. Indeed this is no more than is virtually implied in any genuine repentance. Morever, it was only on condition of the repentance being of this sort (i. e., the becoming as completely devoted to the destruction of sin as was at the time possible), that God could have been satisfied to grant him full forgiveness.

The question is often raised whether some great, heroic act of self-sacrifice for the good of others, such as that of the soldier on the field of battle on behalf of a righteous cause, would not "atone for" the sins of the previous life. To this the answer ought now to be obvious. There is no atonement, in the sense of expiation, save repentance and its consequences, ceasing to do evil and learning to do well. The brave self-sacrificing act, however, *is* "doing well," and it means much for the character of the individual, and so for God's judgment of him. But as an act it means no more (except for later experiences of suffering and the like) that it led to his death, than if he had expected to give his life, but had "fortunately" escaped. And certainly not all who have expected to be killed in battle show by their later lives that they were truly reconciled to God.

The fundamental aspects of the divine providence also come in naturally for consideration under the question of the relation of God to men. God's providence has commonly been subdivided into "general" and "special." "General providence" is held to include all that happens uniformly to men in general, viewed as due to the action or permissive will of God, and as designed to promote the ultimate well-being of all, or at least of all who are eventually to be "saved." "Special providence," in the common view, covers special happenings in the life of the individual or a particular group of individuals, interpreted, if not as due to a divine intervention at the time, at least as being through some divinely arranged special combination of natural or human agencies, and designed to promote in some exceptional manner or degree the true interests of the individual or individuals concerned. Usually, however, a distinction is made between "the realm of providence" and "the realm of grace," the former excluding and the latter including the divine work of redemption through Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in the inner experience of the individual.

But from the point of view of the scientific, empirical attitude, with its critical treatment of traditional theological concepts, the above definitions and distinctions are not altogether satisfactory. Part of what we shall have to say on this subject must be deferred until we come to deal more specifically with the relation of God to the universe, and to the human race, as distinct from his relation to individuals as such. But the essentials of this doctrine of the providential relation of God to men are already implied in what we have said about revelation, the laws of empirical theology, and the moral attributes of God.

In the first place, in criticism of the ordinary doctrine of general providence it must be urged that it is not possible to interpret everything which happens to man as taking place by the express choice or even by the willing permission of a morally perfect God. If it were God's will that man should be sinned against by his fellow-man, then God would not be our "perfect Father"; he would not be as good as Jesus was. No sinful act, since it is, as sinful, an absolute evil, can happen except in opposition to the will of God; and so it cannot be regarded as fall*ing within* the field of the divine or providential. Not even the

sin of crucifying Jesus was providential. It would have been immeasurably more in accord with the will of God if those responsible for this outrage had been more appreciative of the true worth of the Galilean prophet, and had allowed him to continue his spiritual ministry and finally to die in some other way than through the sinful acts of men.

Again, there is serious objection to the interpretation of such events as narrow escapes from death or injury, and other happy coincidences as "special providences." Violent and untimely deaths and countless other events which seem just as unfortunate as the so-called "special providences" seem fortunate are of common occurrence. Nor ought we to expect or even desire to have God take better care of us and our friends than he does of other people. Indeed, a God who had special favorites, of whom he took special providential care, would be so unfair to those not thus favored that he could not be regarded as morally perfect or absolutely sufficient as the Object of religious dependence and worship; he would not even be trustworthy. The only consideration which could conceivably justify special providential care of certain lives, as contrasted with others, would be the greater usefulness to the race of the individuals thus provided for. But there are considerations which make even a special providence of this sort more than doubtful. In the first place, it does not seem that it can be, from any point of view, absolutely certain beforehand—in view of the ultimate freedom of the human will—that the "promising" individual will really prove more serviceable to humanity than some others who may be comparatively "unpromising." Hence all, it would seem, ought to receive equal providential care, or at least in the long run equal opportunity of availing themselves of such providence. Moreover, when we appeal to the facts of experience, we find that many of those who suffer violent and untimely deaths are persons of whom it is practically certain that with continued life they would have done much more good than is being done by many others whose lives have been spared much longer.

If, when we come to treat of God's relation to the universe, it should seem possible to regard the order of nature as in any sense divinely provided, it will then be possible, one would

surmise, to defend the idea of general providence, as being compatible with the divine perfection. It will then be possible, one would judge, to interpret the natural order, viewed as a common platform for the acting out of all life-purposes, as going to show that an equitable provision has been and is being made for human need. Indeed the natural order might be interpreted as designed to be the basis for man's training and learning through consequences what to do and what to avoid. But there would still be an imperative religious demand for some provision to be made so that no event of the natural order could possibly of itself work absolute and irremediable evil to any individual. This is simply one aspect of the universal religious need of special providence, a need which would be obvious enough, if for no other reasons, in view of the consideration that a God who did not take any special interest in and care of the individual would not be one that we could regard as morally perfect, or as absolutely satisfactory as an Object of dependence and worship.

The solution of this problem of the divine providence seems to be found in the discarding of the idea of a rigid opposition between the concepts of providence and grace. Indeed as much has already been implied in our treatment of the concepts of revelation and the answer to prayer, the latter of which we subsumed under special providence. It is in the realm of grace that the special providence of God is to be looked for. Special providence is spiritual provision. It is the divine provision of sufficient grace to enable the individual who enters into and persists in the right religious adjustment to meet in the right spirit whatever he may be called upon to face while travelling in the pathway of duty, and to do what he ought to do in spite of all that may be against him. The bringing about of spiritual preparedness for whatever may come is the true instance of special providence, and it is most readily recognized as such when it occurs in response to the attitude of religious dependence. The crucifying of Jesus, then, was no special providence; neither can we say that it would have been a special providence if he had escaped the cross and had consequently been in a position to carry on his spiritual ministry throughout a normal *lifetime.* But there is a notable instance of special divine prov-

idence in the fact that, in response to his right religious adjustment, that son of man was enabled to meet the crucifixion as he did, faithful unto the end to the cause of the people and to the will of the divine Father. The fact is, we seem to know *no* special providence other than the provision of special grace adequate to our special circumstances and our special spiritual need. We have simply got to learn to be Christian enough to be primarily interested in "sufficient grace" to enable us to do the will of God, and at the same time to be, in the best sense of the term, stoical enough to recognize with satisfaction that this "sufficient grace" is all we need ever look for in the way of special providence. But while this is all we can ever get, it is what we can always get, if we are willing to fulfil the religious conditions. What is always available as the direct and immediate answer to the right sort of prayer is nothing less than God himself, the Holy Spirit, and all that is involved in having God.

CHAPTER II

The Metaphysical Attributes of God

We are now ready to proceed further with the *a posteriori* definition of the religious Object. We have already seen how good God is; we have now to inquire how great he is. Here again our dependence may be upon any one or upon all three of the following procedures: (1) intuition, arising out of vital religious experience, and sufficiently criticized by means of logical and further experiential tests; (2) postulates, imperative for the practical life, taken as working hypotheses and verified sufficiently for all valid practical purposes; (3) theoretical construction, to account for empirical laws, on the principle that we may learn something of what a thing is from what it does. The term "metaphysical attributes" must not be taken, therefore, as implying any "high and dry" metaphysical method of arriving at our conclusions; on the contrary what we are to attempt is to express, without inner contradiction or conflict with established fact, the view of the greatness of God which seems to be involved in the cognitive aspects of experimental religion when it is at its best spiritually, and more particularly, in the laws of empirical theology. The customary term, "metaphysical," is not inappropriate here, however, inasmuch as what is to be asserted would, in our philosophy of religion, be offered as helping to constitute an hypothesis for a fundamentally empirical metaphysic.

Proceeding as suggested, then, we are enabled to say that God is not only sufficiently good to meet all the legitimate demands of experimental religion, but sufficiently great as well. He is great enough to be absolutely dependable and the adequate Source of inner preparedness for anything that can happen, and the Source of actual salvation, deliverance from evil, for all who persist in the right religious adjustment. Here again, then, we find that the fundamental attribute of God is

his absoluteness, his absolute sufficiency and satisfactoriness. Without attempting to anticipate the findings of fundamental religion with respect to the nature of the religious Object, we may again refer to God as the Absolute, meaning by the term, however, as before, the Absolute of experimental religion (the absolutely dependable Object of dependence and Source of salvation).

This is a very different conception of the Absolute from that which has been more or less prevalent, especially recently, among speculative philosophers, who as a rule make little or nothing of the cognitive value of religious experience. In current speculation the doctrine of the "Absolute" exists in a more dogmatic form, and in other, more agnostic forms. In its more dogmatic form it may be represented by the view that it is an eternally complete and completely rational and experiential system, in which are included all things, persons, qualities and relations, which ever were, are now and ever will be. In a perhaps less dogmatic form of absolutism it is maintained that not all separately experienced elements can be present without modification in one rational experienced system, but that the nature of the one all-inclusive Absolute is that of an experience in which all reality, together with all appearances, are included, although *not without modification*, and so, *not* as they appear! We are prepared for the admission that such an Absolute is neither humanly experienceable nor rationally conceivable; but we cannot appreciate the remaining dogmatism which still asserts that it is real.

Somewhat akin to this speculative notion of the "Absolute," especially in this latter, more agnostic form, is the doctrine of God which is characteristic of extreme mysticism. God is held to be neither properly experienceable in the practical life, nor positively conceivable by the rational intelligence. Only in the mystic state can the divine Reality be experienced, it is claimed; and the intellect's closest possible approximation to true judgment about the religious Object of the mystic is to say that it is not what we think, or ever can think, it to be. Thus the theology characteristic of extreme mysticism is fundamentally negative.

Now the theological theory of experimental (i. e., practical

experiential) religion has its negative as well as its positive aspects. God as the Absolute of experimental religion, i. e., as the absolutely sufficient and satisfactory Object of religious dependence and Source of religious deliverance from evil, is not only empirically known to be what man imperatively needs him to be; he is also empirically known not to be what man imperatively needs him not to be. And so our theological theory must be expected, as suggested, to have its negative elements. Moreover, we find that traditional theology, which has perhaps never in its formative periods been completely divorced from practical religious experience, has its list of "negative attributes" of God—incorporeality, invisibility, etc., incomprehensibility, impassibility, immutability, timelessness and infinity. But this list suggests an altogether undue influence of extreme mysticism and a too purely speculative and apriori theological method. We shall therefore examine the attributes in question from the standpoint of practical experimental religion and our empirical theological method.

In the first place, then, must we think of God as incorporeal? It would be absolutely unsatisfactory, of course—fatal, even, to the best type of experimental religion—to think of God in merely corporeal terms. But might not God be spiritual and also in a sense corporeal, somewhat as man, who is spiritual, is also in a sense corporeal? In other words, may not God *be* Spirit, and yet *have* a body? What this is meant to suggest is not the crude anthropomorphism of primitive forms of religious thought (or of present-day Mormonism), but rather the idea that the physical universe may perhaps be related to the divine Spirit somewhat as the human body is related to the human spirit. This is not asserted in any final way in the present connection; an adequate discussion of the point would require us to plunge into metaphysics. But what we seem entitled to say here is that the laws of empirical theology do not exclude the idea that there may be a divine Body, as well as a divine Spirit.

In view of the assumed incorporeality of God, traditional theology has drawn the obvious conclusion that he is invisible. But, we may ask, if the physical universe is God's body, is God any more invisible than man is? Of course in a sense the real *man, the spirit,* is invisible. There is no visible "ghost" of

either man or God. But in observing the activities of our fellowmen in and through their bodies, as well as our own activities in and through our own body, we can "see" (perceive) that they and we exist and are present and at work in the bodies we see. We have only inferential awareness of the thought of others, but we can observe their life and action. And so, if we have achieved religious perception, we can "see" (perceive) that God exists and is present and at work in the physical universe which we see; for even if his present activity is most readily recognizable as operating in human spirits, these spirits animate bodies which are parts of the visible world. We have nothing but inferential awareness of the divine intellection, but we can observe his active life in the universe. And so he may be said to be in a sense perceptibly present in the world in which we live. If it were not so, experimental religion would inevitably languish, and experimental theology would be impossible.

As to incomprehensibility, the question is evidently one of degrees. Doubtless God is not completely comprehensible by the human intellect; but neither is man, nor the tiniest atom or electron of the physical universe. On the other hand, if God were completely incomprehensible, as extreme mystics and extreme agnostics try to maintain, he would be very far from being that absolutely satisfactory Object of dependence and adoration of which experimental religion at its best is assured.

The case is similar with regard to impassibility, i. e., the supposed absence of suffering, and indeed of all feeling, or emotional life. This negative attribute reflects prejudices of Greek philosophers against the whole life of feeling, as originating in the earthly constituent of human nature, in distinction from the divine reason. It was taken to be the mark of being acted upon, and so of not being the Absolute. But, these prejudices against feeling being laid aside, it becomes obvious that a God who was never "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," who never felt love for man nor hatred of sin, who was simply cold intellect and will, would be far from being the adequate Object of devotion of which experimental religion at its best is assured.

And so of immutability. The adequate Object of religious dependence must be unchangeably good and steadfastly committed to the realization of the absolute ideal. But to deny

absolutely that there ever is any sort of change in God is to deny that God is a living God. It is not only to deny the divine activity, but to assert that there are no changes of relation between God and anything or anyone else, except perhaps in relations which make absolutely no difference to God. Manifestly this is not the God of whom he who has experienced atonement, reconciliation, is assured.

The timelessness of the divine Being is a characteristic doctrine of extreme mysticism, and a not uncommon tenet of speculative philosophers and theologians. Now it may be true enough (to speak once again from the point of view of fundamental religion) that the divine *Ideal* is eternal; its validity is not dependent upon considerations of time, nor is it impaired by the lapse of time. But to assert the timelessness of the divine Being, his non-existence in the time-order, is to leave experimental religion not only without any adequate Object of religious dependence, but even without any religious Object upon which to depend for a response to the "right religious adjustment." Or, to revert to what was said of immutability, there must be change enough in the divine Being for the divine activity, and for significant relations with persons; and there must be time for this, as for all change. God is not to be thought of as timeless, but as real at all times.

But the one negative attribute of God which is generally regarded as religiously indispensable is infinity. Now as applied to God in ordinary religious speech the term is somewhat loosely used and is not so much negative as positive in significance. It often means simply the acme of greatness; it is a strong expression—hyperbole, perhaps—for the absolute sufficiency of the divine Being. As such, then, it may be allowed to stand. Moreover, even when viewed in its negative aspect, if it is understood as meaning simply that the religious Object is free from all those limiting conditions which would render it inadequate as the Object of absolute dependence and worship, it is, from the point of view of experimental religion, an essential attribute of the divine nature. But if the term is used in the sense of absolutely unconditioned, or unlimited in any way, it must be denied of the God of experimental religion, who is *known to* enter into such relations with human free agents as

condition the divine activity. Moreover, taken in any quantitative sense, as involving an actual sum of elements of any sort so great that it could not be made greater by adding to it, the notion of infinity, besides being of more than doubtful applicability to God, becomes inherently self-contradictory.

Still, what is self-contradictory, when applied to *actuality*, may nevertheless be free from contradiction and a legitimate concept, if applied to *possibility*. The idea of God as the actual Source of unending future development, and thus as *infinitely potential*, seems not only unobjectionable intellectually and religiously, but even necessarily involved in the absolute sufficiency of the Object depended upon by man for the unending conservation of the values of human personality.

Turning now to the positive attributes of God, we shall continue to use as a touchstone the fundamental attribute of absoluteness, interpreted in the pragmatic sense required by experimental religion. And first among the positive attributes involved in this postulated and experienced absoluteness, we shall discuss the scholastic-sounding attribute of aseity. William James has made use of this attribute of God as found in the scholastic theology, as an illustration of ideas—or better, words—which have no practical significance whatever. It makes no difference to religious experience, he declares, whether God is thought of as being *a se*, or not. But as a matter of fact this attribute, which means self-dependent rather than dependent upon some more ultimate reality, makes all the difference between being God and not being God. If the Object of our religious dependence is ultimately self-dependent, he is the one beyond whom we neither need nor can go, in seeking power to realize the true ideal. Moreover, it is particularly important to stress this attribute of aseity in these times, when the Object suggested for our religious devotion is represented as so limited a being as to be very far from coinciding with the ultimate Object of our religious dependence.

But the metaphysical attribute of God in which practical religious interest seems to center is omnipotence. Effectual faith involves belief in "God, the Father Almighty," the Being absolute in *power* as well as in goodness. But these terms, "the Almighty" and "absolute power," must be interpreted prag-

matically, after the manner of experimental religion, as involving (to state the indispensable minimum) absolute sufficiency of God's power for all the imperative religious needs of men. No religious interest would be served by ability on God's part to make the sum of two and two equal to five, or to cause a door to stand open and remain shut at the same time, or to change the past, or to do any of the absurd, self-contradictory and inherently impossible tasks that idle thought might propose. Similar objection may be rightly made to the supposition that God could have left man a free agent, so as to be in a position to develop moral character, and at the same time unconditionally guarantee that he would never make any sinful use of this freedom; or that God is able to grant moral salvation to anyone in opposition to what is ultimately willed by the person concerned. These suppositions may not be as obviously, but they are as really self-contradictory as the others. But it is idle also to ask whether God can do wrong or excuse moral evil, for even if he could he would not, and so any theoretical freedom on his part or supposed ability to do so, would make no difference to us or to anyone else. Nor is it desirable that any such things should ever be done.

At this point we are on the verge of the question of miracle, the systematic discussion of which is postponed until we come to deal with the relations of God to the universe. For the present it will suffice to suggest that while the non-occurrence of interventions of any specified sort in the realm of nature would be more safely construed as meaning that God cannot wisely do such things than as meaning that God cannot do such things at all, the difference between the two, pragmatically speaking, is perhaps not great.

What is of chief practical concern, however, and what can be affirmed on grounds of religious experience at its best is that with God all things that faith has the right to demand are possible; he is able to do all that man needs to have done for him by divine power. All that man needs of God, apart from the privilege of the divine fellowship, is an orderly universe on which to stand, freedom of action, immortality, and salvation, individual and social; and God is able to give him all these. He *is able, in all his* dealings with man, to conserve the free agency

of the human spirit. He is also able, we may surmise in anticipation of considerations to be entered into at a later stage of our discussion, to grant a continuation of the personal life after the incident of physical death. He is "almighty to save"—"able to save to the uttermost" those who are desirous enough of moral and spiritual salvation to enter as fully as they can into the right religious adjustment. He can enable man to be inwardly prepared to meet with moral triumph whatever can happen to him, and to be continuously and progressively delivered from moral evil and developed into moral good.

It may thus be said that God is always able to do what, in view of the existing circumstances, he chooses and decides to do, and at the time when he chooses to do it; and yet, it would seem, he is not always able to bring to pass what he would have chosen to have take place, at least as soon as he would have chosen to have it occur, had it been possible. This is because the free co-operation of finite spirits is essential for the realization of many of the ends toward which God is working. This is the only explanation of the fact that not all are saved from sin, either by prevention or even by cure, in spite of the existence of a God abundantly willing and able to save. But however man by his individual or collective activities may hinder and indefinitely postpone the realization of the divine ideal, God is still able to supply further educative and disciplinary experience in the task he has set himself of saving the individual and the world without over-riding human freedom. This undertaking will never be abandoned until it is accomplished, unless man should, through persistence in sin, finally destroy his own freedom and therewith his conscious existence—and this we do not know to be even possible. Moreover, while we are perhaps *not* in a position to say that in spite of all the opposition which the will of God could ever possibly encounter from wills not merely immature but perverse, his own good will *will* finally be realized in the moral salvation of all, faith may still surmise that perhaps the time will come when, in spite of all the opposition which as a matter of fact God will have encountered, his will to conduct all existing beings through freedom to holiness will have been realized; in which case it would be true that God always *was* able to win over every other

will to his own way. One could *then* say: God's love was omnipotent; God was able to save all men without taking away their freedom, and the proof that he could do it is that he has done it. Or, from the point of view of the present, in answer to the question, Can man resist the will of God forever? one may say, Perhaps man *will* not do so; and if he does not, who then will say whether or not he *could* have done so? One feels the appropriateness of Charles Wesley's question, "He wills that I should holy be; What can withstand his will?" But perhaps it may be well for *us* to leave the question unanswered as yet! Whether *God* knows the answer to this question or not, it would seem that here is a theological question which *man* cannot answer, so long as anyone remains unreconciled to God and unsaved from sin.

Like the attribute of omnipotence, the attribute of omniscience is to be interpreted pragmatically. In experimental religion at its best, there is practical and intuitive assurance not only that God has sufficient power for the satisfaction of all man's religious need, but also sufficient knowledge and wisdom for the guidance of that power. His knowledge is absolute—absolutely sufficient. He knows, sufficiently for all his purposes as God, all present reality, all that has existed in the past, and all certainties, possibilities and probabilities with reference to the future. He knows adequately the life and inner experience of each individual, although *how* he knows this may perhaps have to be left as a question for metaphysics. He knows all this always, or at least always when necessary, whether it be in the form of presentation in direct experience, or of representation in thought, or as having the power to present or represent it at will. The wisdom of God is his adequate knowledge in the service of the purposes of his absolutely holy will.

The question is sometimes raised as to whether God can know beforehand all that will happen in the future, and particularly the future free acts of men. We have said that he can forecast the future sufficiently for all his purposes as God—i. e., sufficiently to enable him to work in the best way for the realization of his purposes. But this does not necessarily mean that he knows before the time, as certain, what in the nature of the case is uncertain until the moment of decision. Such sup-

posed knowledge would not be true knowledge; "a thing known for certain cannot be uncertain" * and the only way to know human decisions beforehand as they are, is to know them as possible, and more or less probable (and just how probable), but still uncertain. Obviously, this is no imperfection of knowledge; and if we can say that, no matter what possible future man makes actual by his decision, God always knows what to do (and this we are entitled to assert on grounds of the assurance of religion at its best, that God is absolute), it is clear that God's knowledge is just what it ought to be, if he is to be a perfect Object of religious dependence.

Let it be granted, then, that God knows it to be uncertain beforehand as to just when a certain individual will decide to yield to the will of God. A further question is the following: Given unending time and the inexhaustible resourcefulness of God in knowledge and in power, and given also the unending continuation of man's freedom of choice, will God ultimately succeed in persuading all men to yield voluntarily to his will? Granted that God will never give up his reconciling work so long as he has not yet succeeded, is it possible for man to resist forever? This is the question we raised in connection with God's omnipotence, and very possibly we may not know the correct answer to it; but our present interest in it is as to whether *God* knows the true answer? To *this* question the answer seems to be as follows: If it is certain beforehand that God is going to fail in any particular undertaking, evidently he does not know it, for he would not be what he is known to be, viz., the adequate Object of religious dependence, if he persisted in working for what he knew could not be obtained. If it is certain beforehand that God is not going to fail, or in other words, if the fact is that God's failure is impossible, God may perhaps know this, even if we do not. If, again, it is possible beforehand in the nature of the case that he may fail, and possible that he may succeed, God may perhaps know this, even if we do not. That is, we may be right in believing that God knows whether his partial ultimate failure is possible or impossible, although *we* may not ourselves be in a position to say which of these alternatives is correct. But in any case, in view of the creative

* J. Martineau: "A Study of Religion," Vol. II, p. 263.

freedom of the human will. It would seem that God must know that the time of his future success in winning the free surrender of any rebellious will to his will is uncertain, however the probabilities may favor one time rather than another. And in all this we are free to believe, as indeed in experimental religion at its best one is assured, that God knows future certainties as certain, and future uncertainties as uncertain, at least adequately for his being the absolutely satisfactory Object of religious dependence. And we may be sure too that this is true, and that God himself knows it: that so long as the future moral salvation of any individual or group is not known to be impossible, God will never give up doing all he can do in the direction of that consummation so devoutly to be wished.

Supplementary to the attributes of omnipotence and omniscience is the attribute of omnipresence. The intuitive and practical certainty of experimental religion in its moral and rational form is to the effect that God has not only sufficient power to be absolutely satisfactory as the Object of religious dependence, and sufficient knowledge and wisdom for the absolutely satisfactory guidance of that power, but also sufficient immediate experience of reality as a basis for this adequate knowledge. If he is to know all, he must have empirical contact (or be present) with all, or at least be in a position to get this empirical contact as it may be needed. This is the practical essence of omnipresence.

Moreover, in experimental religion at its best there is the assurance that God is accessible to the religious individual wherever he may go, and indeed to all men everywhere. It is impossible to flee from the divine presence; one may abide in his own land, or take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, and he will find God there, if he turns to him in the right religious attitude; indeed he might conceivably ascend up into heaven or even make his bed in Sheol, and still in either case find God accessible (*Psalm* 139:7-10). Wherever there is a human spirit, there is the potentiality of a revelation of the divine. This gives us further light on the practical significance of the divine omnipresence: man can get into touch with God anywhere, and God is in touch with the whole universe and (actually or potentially)

with every one in it and as far as necessary, with every part of it.

At this point, as at many others, while theology contains fruitful suggestions for metaphysics, it has need of metaphysics. A need is felt for some rational conception as to how it is that God is accessible to all human spirits and at the same time able to experience at will any phase of reality he may have occasion thus to present within the field of his direct awareness. But empirical theology has further suggestions of its own in this connection, the discussion of which leads us to take up what may be regarded either as an attribute of the divine nature, almost coincident with omnipresence, or as a phase of the relation of God to the world, viz., the divine immanence. In this immediate connection we shall consider it as an attribute of God.

According to experimental religion in critical form, revelation takes place primarily in the spiritual experience of man in response to the right religious adjustment; and what revelation is, essentially, is the perceptible and recognizable incoming and immanence of the divine within the human, and so of the divine within the universe. Now it may be that the divine is to be found in the human more widely than this, as is claimed from the point of view of fundamental religion. Indeed it may very well be that the divine life indwells the universe beyond the human altogether, as many mystics and speculative theologians, and some others, maintain; such a view is not contradicted by anything in experimental religion, but is even suggested by what has just been said in the discussion of omnipresence. But even granting the reality of this wider immanence, the point of importance just here is that, according to experimental religion at its best, there are degrees of the immanence of the divine, the highest degree of immanence existing where revelation is, objectively speaking, greatest—in other words, where the Holy Spirit is most fully present and manifest in the life. This consideration effectually counters the pantheistic suggestions of the doctrine of immanence in its more extreme and one-sided form, according to which God is *as* fully *immanent* in the material as in the spiritual, and *as* truly in the *immoral* as in the moral. Such extreme pantheism is almost identical,

practically speaking, with atheism. Experimental religion, on the contrary, is based upon the assumption that God is not *equally* present in all phases of the universe, but becomes more fully immanent as he is revealed in the promotion of the spiritual life in response to man's right religious adjustment.

However, even in the theoretical part of a theology built upon experimental religion the suggestion may be received with favor that the physical universe, within which the divine Spirit is immanent, may be the divine Body, indwelt by the divine Life, somewhat as the human body is indwelt by the human life and directed by the human spirit. But detailed discussion of this suggestion would carry us into metaphysics.

Complementary to the attribute (or relation) of immanence is the attribute (or relation) of transcendence. Experimental religion arises out of a state of dissatisfaction with the already experienced. It exhibits a "tendency toward the transcendent" (to use Wobbermin's phrase), a seeking to promote and conserve values appreciated, by forming an alliance with the supra-mundane. It is interested, to be sure, in revelation, the becoming immanent of the divine; but it is the (otherwise) transcendent that it would have to become immanent. In practical experimental religion at its best not only is an adequate transcendent divine Power favorable to man's spiritual welfare *postulated;* the postulate, taken as a working-hypothesis, has led to the verifying experience of the immanence of the divine in the spiritual uplift dependent upon this right religious adjustment. The emphasis upon transcendence is thus a mark of religious realism, with its doctrine of a real God for man's practical dependence.

The doctrine of transcendence must not be carried to a one-sided extreme, of course; for if we think of God as so transcendent that he is never immanent, we not only (with the deists) practically deny revelation of a living God; we adopt a position which, from the standpoint of experimental religion, practically amounts to having no God at all. Thus we see that the pantheistic extreme of immanence without transcendence and the deistic extreme of transcendence without immanence are both, pragmatically considered, about the same thing as atheism.

But how can we think of God as both transcendent and im-

manent—as being both in the universe and beyond it? May not the solution of this problem be found in the attribute of personality, and Lotze's suggestion that, as the human personal self is in a sense present within the little world of its experience, and yet as subject forever distinct from and more than that world as its object, so the divine Being is a personal Spirit, present in the universe, which is the world of its experience, and yet as subject distinct from and more than that world as it object? The detailed elaboration and theoretical defense of this suggestion belong to metaphysics, but the conception of God as personal has ample support, not alone in the primitive phases of experimental religion, with their "personifying apperception," as Wundt calls it, but also and especially in the assurances of practical experimental religion at its highest stage of development. Indeed the essentials of personality in the religious Object have been either clearly implied or remotely indicated throughout practically the whole of our theological procedure, beginning with our first collation of the empirical data. The divine has been found revealed in the supreme human personality and in the highest phases of the spiritual experience of other human persons, presumably as the Holy Spirit. The peculiarly divine work has been the work—presumably personal—of reconciling human persons to the divine Being—evidently a Person. The only "absolutely satisfactory" moral attributes of the divine character, holiness and love, virtually presuppose personality. The same may be said of the metaphysical attributes, particularly omniscience and, as we have just seen, immanence and transcendence viewed in conjunction. Throughout all this, personality is the only unifying concept humanly available.

Objection is frequently made to the idea of the personality of God on the ground of its being unduly anthropomorphic. Now it is doubtless true that many of the specific qualities and limitations of *human* personality cannot be properly applied to God. But this may be interpreted as meaning (to follow a suggestion from Lotze again), not that God is not personal, but that he alone is completely personal, man's personality being but incomplete and fragmentary. In any case what we are concerned to affirm of God is the essence of personality, viz.,

rational (and no doubt one might add, empirical) consciousness, including self-consciousness and self-directed activity. A person is a spiritual being, or spirit—not a visible "ghost," and not even disembodied necessarily, but a "loving, intelligent will" (R. L. Swain). The question of the personality of the Absolute is generally, and truly enough, regarded as a problem of metaphysics; but in the present connection it may be said of the *religious* Absolute (the absolutely sufficient Object of religious dependence) that it is not only practically necessary that it be personal, and intuitively certain that it is so, as we have seen; there seems to be promise also that the view will prove theoretically permissible as well. For although the Absolute (of metaphysics) includes all, and a person distinguishes himself from all, as Mansel pointed out, it is also true that the person may think of himself as including all his experience of other things within himself, and of the field of his experience as in some sense containing all the objects of which he has experience. At all events, the concept of "superpersonality" does not help us much, notoriously because of our absolute lack of experience of any entity qualitatively superior to personality at its best. Consequently either one or the other of two courses becomes necessary. Either we must interpret "superpersonality" (quantitatively, for example) as including personality (along with extra-personal phases of life), in which case it becomes legitimate enough as predicated of the religious Object (for there is more than *mere* personality in all incarnate human beings, and the same thing may perhaps be true of the divine Being); or else, excluding the personal, we may allow the term "superpersonal" to sink to the significance of the subpersonal, which, it is true, we have experienced, but which is obviously inadequate to be the Object of religious dependence and adoration. In other words, God may be superpersonal, but not in any sense of the term that would contradict his being truly personal.

We shall next consider the unity of God. Practical experimental religion not only demands, but at its best it is assured of *at least one* God. But granted that this God is the absolute One, absolutely sufficient for man's needs, it follows that *no more than one* is needed. Unless there is adequate empirical

evidence of the existence of more than one God, or unless monotheism should prove to be metaphysically indefensible, this suggestion of one and only one God should be allowed to stand. The burden of proof rests upon the person who affirms polytheism as against monotheism. The principle of parsimony, so fundamental to scientific method, opposes explaining by reference to more than one causal agency what can be fully explained by referring to one, especially if that one is the only one *known* to exist. Moreover, not only does the unity of the world suggest the unity of the divine, if the divine is to be thought of as ruling the world; the natural religious attitude is also inherently unitary in its direction. Even polytheism tends to be the worship of one god at a time. Polytheistic theory arose because no one god believed in was thought to be adequate to fulfil all the functions attributed to the divine. But belief in more than one god makes difficulties for practical religion, more troublesome than the theoretical difficulties it was designed to remove. As has happened over and over again in historic polytheism, mutual opposition might be thought of as arising between the gods; and in such a case the religious individual could never be fully assured that the right relation to any particular god was the right relation to the divine in general or as a whole.

What we have said in disparagement of polytheism is not without its application to certain phases of traditional Christian belief. The constant intervention of spirits, good or bad, and especially of a practically omnipresent, almost omnipotent and absolutely evil spirit, the devil, in human affairs, has tended to prevent or impair the insight that there is only one religious adjustment required, and that, that being fulfilled, the worshiper has no need to have any concern about a devil, even if he does not feel that he can go so far as to deny that there may be one. We are perhaps not in a position to deny that there are any good or evil spirits besides God and those "finite" spirits who either are or have been physically embodied; but from the point of view of a critical empirical theology, there seems no adequate reason for affirming their existence. (Further discussion of this topic will be found toward the end of the final chapter.)

But at times in the history of Christian thought the doctrine of the unity of God has been imperilled in another way. By

many the doctrine of the Trinity has been held in such a way as involved a departure from monotheism, not only theoretically, but practically as well. If God is one and God is personal, the most obvious suggestion is that God is one Person. The Trinitarian dogma that God exists in, or is, three persons, has sometimes come almost or altogether to mean to the believer that there are three personal gods; and not infrequently there has been the still more serious departure from monotheism of supposing that the attitude of the first Person of the Trinity toward man is, or at least was, essentially different from that of the second Person, the latter being much more approachable and gracious than the former. This is polytheism, practically as well as theoretically.

However, let us look further into this Christian doctrine of a divine trinity. It is a highly metaphysical doctrine, and is largely the outcome of an attempt to set forth the Christian revelation-faith in terms of Greek philosophy. But the Christian religion, it is interesting in this connection to note, includes within itself a practical and a somewhat mystical element, the former derived largely from Judaism and the latter probably in some measure from the most vital phases of contemporary Greek religion. Now practical religion naturally tends, as it progresses, to arrive at the belief in one transcendent personal God who can be depended upon to respond to man in his religious attitude. Moreover, as this practical and preeminently monotheistic religion becomes moral, its God comes to be regarded as morally perfect—"your Father in heaven," who "is perfect." Thus Jewish religion culminates in *the religion of Jesus*. But Christianity includes not only this but, as has often been pointed out, *the religion about Jesus*. The gospel about Jesus seems not to have been developed without certain influences from Greek mystical religion and the metaphysics with which mystical religion generally undertakes to vindicate its point of view. On this side we find emphasized not so much the transcendence as the immanence of God—e. g., as the Logos or divine presence in the world and especially within the human in its more spiritual aspects. Thus the one great outstanding revealer of the divine might be considered as the divine man. Moreover, the Logos, or divine presence,

which was in a sense incarnate and revealed in him, was also to be found in other lives in so far as they were brought to participate in the same ideal qualities. But from this point of view the *ultimate* divine Being, the Object of mystical contemplation, was the super-rational, super-moral, super-personal, ineffable *One*. The resources of Christian thought were then as follows: On the practical-Jewish side, the one personal moral God, "*the Father*"; on the mystical-philosophical Greek side, the super-personal *One*, and the divine in the human, especially in the one uniquely divine man or "*Son of God*," and in others as the divine or "*Holy Spirit*." In Christianity as expressed in the Trinitarian formula, we have these various resources added together—somewhat crudely, perhaps—and modified somewhat by metaphysical speculation. The result was this: the one divine Substance in which eternally subsist three distinct divine persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

This particular solution may not be entirely acceptable to us, but in large measure the problem of which it was the proffered solution is still our problem, viz., how to combine the results of practical moral religion in its highest development, with the insights of mystical, philosophical religion at its purest and best; or more briefly, to combine the truths of the divine transcendence and the divine immanence. And it may be doubted whether this can be done better than by a formula which rather closely approximates the traditional Trinitarianism. If we take the term "God" broadly, so as to include the Body (the physical universe) as well as the Spirit of God, we can say that in a quantitative sense God is super-personal, although at the same time, of course, personal. But God is only one divine Person, although he is immanent in myriads of (human) persons. God is "the Father," transcendently real, but self-revealing as well, and morally perfect. The outstanding and uniquely saving individual self-revelation of the Father was in his beloved "Son," the historic Jesus. But the God who was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, is at the same time the "Holy Spirit," immanent in the Christlike everywhere. Indeed, to introduce momentarily once more the point of view of fundamental religion, we may surmise that the divine Spirit is immanent in some measure in all, as "the Light which lighteth every man."

In this way the vital religious essence of historic Trinitarianism can be rationally retained for modern thought, and that without any requirement of subscription to the perplexing dogma of three eternal and equally divine persons which are nevertheless not three personal gods, but only one.

Finally among the attributes of God, if we may call it one, is existence. A reviewer of a recent volume entitled "The Christian Doctrine of God" felt called upon to remark that while the author had succeeded in setting forth a picture of the divine character to which one could feel no moral repugnance, he had nevertheless failed to mention one very important attribute of this God, viz., the attribute of non-existence. Now it is true enough that if we proceed to build up in purely apriori fashion our notion of God, it becomes exceedingly difficult in the end to demonstrate that fully-defined God's existence. Moreover, if we have made even the slightest mistake in our delineation, then it becomes true that the God of whom *all* we have asserted is true does not really exist at all. But if we start with the assurance, already achieved in normal religious experience and critically defensible, to the effect *that God is*, and if we proceed inductively to discover ever more completely *what God is*, an erroneous conclusion does not invalidate the judgment that there is an Object of religious dependence which is Source of deliverance from evil, a Power not identical with the empirical self which makes for righteousness on condition of a certain discoverable objective religious adjustment, a Being great enough and good enough to deliver from sin and to enable the one rightly related thereto to be spiritually prepared for all that may possibly happen. Indeed, if we have made no mistake in our attempts to formulate, on the basis of the findings of experimental religion, the view of God involved in this experience of moral salvation through religious dependence, then we are entitled to say that the God who has all these other attributes has the attribute of existence also. In short, when our idea of God is scientific enough and our religious experience is what it ought to be, we shall know that the God of whom we have an idea exists. This, then, will be the one and only satisfactory proof of the existence of God, the religio-empirical proof in its *final*, consummate form.

CHAPTER III

The Relation of God to the Universe

There exists a God, then, who is good enough and great enough to be absolutely sufficient for the imperative and valid demands of practical experimental religion. What does this involve for the relation of God to the universe? Obviously, adequate control in the interests of his relation to men. This absolutely sufficient and satisfactory providential control must mean, at its essential minimum, provision that the universe shall be orderly enough, but not too rigid, to permit both what we have designated variously as special providence, revelation, answer to prayer, salvation, preparedness for whatever may have to be faced, actual deliverance from absolute evil—this in response to the right religious adjustment—and at the same time all that such special providence necessarily presupposes. Among these presuppositions of special providence are human experience, intelligence and moral freedom, and man's relation to a universe in which there are both occasion and appropriate means for intelligent and moral action. Involved also in the absolute sufficiency of the inner preparedness and salvation for the realizing of which man is able confidently to relate himself to God, is personal immortality. This last consideration will be developed more fully in a latter connection, but for completeness it is important to mention it here in view of the fact that the physical order necessitates the physical death not only of every individual but ultimately of the race as well. What is asserted is that God is absolutely sufficient to keep the universe from preventing adequate spiritual preparedness for all contingencies and the steadily progressive salvation of such individuals and communities as maintain the right religious adjustment. God is absolutely sufficient for this, whether it may involve maintaining the order of the universe, or responding to man's adjustment in spite of the order of the universe, or both.

When the question is raised as to how this absolutely sufficient providential control is accomplished, the answer sometimes given is that it is through absolute predetermination of every event, including every human action. This predetermination is sometimes thought of as having been antecedent to all creation, sometimes as more immanental and progressive throughout the course of time. In any case, it is claimed, by this means it is guaranteed that everything that happens shall be, as seen from the ultimate point of view, perfectly in accord with the perfectly good and wise will of God. But any such doctrine of absolute predetermination is opposed by two objections, which, from the point of view of our empirical theology as thus far developed, are absolutely fatal. In the first place it would make it necessary for us to think of moral evil, or what we cannot avoid judging to be moral evil, as being God's deed—in which case we could not regard him as good enough to be absolutely worthy of trust or worship. In the second place, since absolutely to predetermine free moral agents is impossible, being self-contradictory, man would have to be regarded as not free—in which case he could not even be a moral person, much less morally saved. Manifestly God's providential control of the universe must be conceived in some such way as will mean the avoidance of any interference with man's being a free and responsible agent.

Another suggestion sometimes offered as to how God secures his absolutely sufficient providential control of the universe is that he intervenes from time to time, as need may arise, by free, more or less creative acts (such as "miracles" would be), in order to direct the course of events according to his good pleasure. Waiving for the moment the question whether there is or is not divine intervention within the inner life, religious or other, of the human spirit, it may be remarked that even if there is intervention enough for moral salvation, it by no means follows that there is direct intervention in external nature. Moreover, the assertion of such intervention in external nature would raise serious problems. In the first place, is there any evidence, tested with adequately critical care and found convincing, upon which such intervention can be based as in any one instance an established fact? In the second place, if inter-

vention is the method depended upon for the providential control of nature, why is it not resorted to more frequently, so as to prevent those appalling calamities, physical and social, individual and racial, with which we are so familiar? In the third place, if it were resorted to at all frequently, would it not interfere with man's ever learning how to adjust himself to, and how to make use of his natural environment? These questions would easily carry us into a systematic discussion of the question of miracles, but this we shall postpone to a later part of our theological theory. The question of immediate interest here is as to God's providential control of the universe, in so far as this can be thought of as secured not only without interference with the freedom and moral responsibility of human beings, but also apart from any miraculous intervention in the realm of external nature.

But perhaps we ought not to reject totally either the idea of predetermination or that of divine intervention. May we not say that there are both *enough* predetermination and *enough* divine intervention to secure adequate providential control of the course of the world? More explicitly, may there not be, on the one hand, predetermination of the processes of the universe sufficient for the education of man through his observation of natural sequences, including the consequences of human action? And on the other hand, may there not be divine intervention enough for man's moral salvation through the response of God to the right religious adjustment on the part of man? Indeed, so far as the latter is concerned, we have already seen this to be a fact; and if this involves miracle, then miracle is a fact. But it seems scarcely less certain that the predetermined order of nature is providentially designed to have an instrumental and especially educational function in human life. Assuming, as in the light of considerations already mentioned we may, that the divine goodness and greatness are absolutely sufficient for human need, why, we may ask, has the universe been left for us, and why have we been left in it and under the necessity of relating ourselves to it, if it is not that it is God's will that the consequences of action should be what they are, and that we should learn from the universe, especially in the light of consequences, what the will of God is

for our lives? Clearly enough the order of the universe constitutes a divinely authorized educational course; and so, other things being equal, he who has made most progress in getting and spreading a scientific understanding of the world he lives in has acted most agreeably to the will of God. But scientific information is not the whole of education. Science, to be sure, "has doubled the average length of life and quadrupled the productivity of labor," thus enabling twice as many human beings to live and learn and develop for twice the former period upon a now much more intelligible earth; and this must be pleasing to the God of perfect benevolence. But science has also much more than quadrupled the destructiveness of war; it has rendered all human activity more efficient, whether guided by good or ill will; and so it is, if anything, more imperative than ever that the will of man, individual and social, be made what it ought to be. Man must learn to *do* right, i. e., to act in accord with a proper appreciation of values and a correct understanding of consequences. He must learn, for example, to act upon the truth that only justice and mercy will work satisfactorily in the long run, whether it be between individuals or between nations. And that the order of the universe is such that this is what experience finally teaches, goes to prove the providential character of the natural order.

But not only does the universe (or God through the universe) teach that scientific culture needs, for its guidance into beneficent channels, a certain sort of morality; we are also taught in the same empirical way that morality, for its highest development and efficiency, requires a certain sort of experimental religion. We are taught by consequences that in certain special crises of the spiritual life we need vital and scientific experimental religion for the promotion of good will, the imperative need of which, among other things, we learn through scientific observation of predetermined consequences.*

* From the point of view of fundamental religion it may be made to appear that God teaches internally as well as externally, and that even the intellectual striving for truth is a divine process, as is also the becoming more tractable on the part of the disposition and will. Similarly too, when the man of good will provides for any of the needs of man, this may be interpreted, from the standpoint of fundamental religion and belief in the immanence of God, as God's providential activity.

Thus we find that God has at least two ways of securing his adequate providential control of the universe, without interference with human freedom of action and apart from any recourse to miraculous intervention in the realm of external nature. He offers a shorter and therefore preferred way to the realization of his will, but has a longer, more roundabout way to be brought into operation in case man's actions make it impossible to use the former. The preferred way is essentially that of the divine control of human persons not only through their progressive rationalization, but particularly through such intervention as is involved in the salvation of wills in response to the right religious adjustment. Since it becomes possible in this way for God's will to be done, even if it should not be possible without this, the situation in which man finds himself is such that for him any absolute evil is rendered unnecessary, and so the indispensable minimum of God's control of the universe is adequately provided for. But if man should refuse to will God's will, or to turn to God that he may be enabled to do so, he will be caused to experience certain painful and otherwise undesirable consequences, in the light of which he may learn that no way works well ultimately but the morally right way. Thus he will tend to discover, by the roundabout "trial and error" method, his need of morality, individual and social, on the one hand, and of a moral form of experimental religion on the other. Thus God's more roundabout method of providential control through natural consequences tends to point men toward his preferred method, of controlling the course of events by making essentially right and good the wills which freely enter into the right religious relation.*

Assuming, then, on the basis of what has been said, that experimental religion at its best furnishes an adequate basis for assurance that there is an adequate divine providential control of the universe, guaranteeing the permanent possibility of special providence, or revelation, in response to the right religious adjustment, and furnishing an objective basis for education through consequences, the question may be asked whether

* On the relation of the divine providence to war and its outcome, see the author's booklet, "God in a World at War," London: George Allen and Unwin, 1918, especially pages 23 to 26.

empirical theology has anything to say further as to the meaning of this for God's relation to the universe. *How* is it that God is able thus adequately to provide for imperative human needs, in spite of all that the universe can do? Here the most obvious suggestion is that the providential control is possible because the universe itself is being constantly preserved or upheld in some way by the divine power. The only other alternatives which seem at all plausible are that God made a universe that would be self-sustaining and self-directing, or that he found an already existing independent universe which happened to be of such a character that he could judge the realization of his purposes to be possible therein. The pragmatic difference between either of these latter views and the one first suggested is perhaps not great, since in either case the universe is divinely guaranteed to be adequately dependable, and the laws of its sequences to be what God wills, or at least consents, that they should be. The only consideration requiring special attention on grounds of practical religion is that the idea of the aseity of God be properly safeguarded, for it is involved in the absoluteness of God that we need not go beyond him to find the object of our *ultimate* (or religious) dependence. Any further elaboration of this point must come from metaphysics.

We seem able to say, then, either that God's relation to the universe is preservation, or else that it is *as if* it were preservation. And when the question is asked as to how this preservation is accomplished, the most obvious suggestion is that it is through a dynamic process which may be characterized as creative preservation or upholding. This would mean, for instance, that the psychophysical laws according to which various psychical elements and complexes come into being on certain physiological conditions, and themselves in turn condition certain physiological events, are laws of the divine activity.* Again, the laws of biological evolution, according to which life presses on toward more highly complicated forms, checked and negatively guided by natural selection, would also

* The surmise of fundamental religion that the spiritual processes involved in the realization of valid ideals are divine activities is suggestive in this connection, but it raises problems as to the relation of the free human personality to the divine which must be handed over to metaphysics.

be laws of the immanent divine operation. Moreover, even the chemical and mechanical laws would appear as laws of the divine creative preservation, or active upholding, of the universe. At any rate the laws of nature, from this point of view, either are laws of God's creative preservation of the world, or else they are *as if* they were such; they are what amounts to this for all practical purposes. Further consideration of the point belongs to metaphysics.

If, finally, the question be put as to how this divine creative preservation of the universe comes to have been possible, the most obvious answer is that it rests upon the fact of an original divine creation of the stuff of the universe; because if God brought the world into being in the first place, he presumably can preserve it and adequately control it. The suggestion is somewhat speculative, however, for experimental religion at its best is assured that God can adequately control the universe, whether he created it or not. The question as to whether God actually created the world, or found it ready-made or coming into being independently, must be referred to metaphysics. But obviously a God great enough for all valid religious needs of men can be said to be great enough to have been the Creator of the world, if it should appear that in no other way would he have been in a position adequately to control its course.

In connection with this conception of God's creation of the universe, the problem of the origination of the lives of free creative spirits is an interesting one. It would seem that the idea in question involves God's being a Creator of creators. At any rate our theological theory would indicate that God is at least related to men practically *as if* he were the Creator of creators. This question too we must hand over to metaphysics.

We have now come to the place in our consideration of the relation of God to the universe where we can take up the question of miracles. In contemporary thought we find miracle defined in two widely different ways. One of these types of definition is objective but very narrow, while the other is broad but wholly subjective. The narrow type of definition is offered in some cases by conservatives, who wish to affirm miracle in the sense defined, and in other cases by radicals who intend to

deny the reality of any such event. Such definitions are that a miracle is an event involving the suspension of some law or laws of nature; "an event in the external world, due to the immediate activity of God apart from second causes" (C. W. Hodge); "a marvellous event occurring within human experience, which cannot have been brought about by human power or by the operation of any natural agency, and must therefore be ascribed to the special intervention of the Deity, or of some supernatural being" (J. M. Thompson). The broad type of definition is offered by mediating liberals who wish to affirm miracle in the sense defined. Such a definition is that of Schleiermacher, in which he is followed by Ritschl, according to which "miracle" is "the religious name for an event," i. e., any event religiously appreciated, or felt to have religious or revelation-value. With this definition, it would seem, there would be almost no event which might not be a miracle to some one; some would find all reality miraculous, while others would be without any consciousness of miracle anywhere. In empirical theology, however, as in experimental religion, we are interested in practically significant, objective distinctions, which this broad, subjective definition would tend to ignore. Evidently then, before attempting to affirm or deny the reality of miracle, it is important that we decide upon a definition.

Originally, what was called miracle was a remarkable event, such as was believed to require for its performance a divine or at least mysterious superhuman power, and which was felt to have special value as evidence of the existence, presence and activity of a Being possessing such power. Now the history of experimental religion is, in one of its most important aspects, the history of the attempt to discover just what miracles (in the sense of this definition) do actually take place, i. e., what miracles man will be able to depend upon God to perform in response to the right religious adjustment on man's part. As the understanding of events became gradually more scientific and the conception of natural law consequently more definite, many events formerly regarded as miracles came to be looked upon as purely natural occurrences, while the conception of miracle came commonly to include the idea of an infringement or suspension of natural law. This brought on the modern crisis in miracle-

belief, in the midst of which we still are, and which has led to the different types of definition to which we have referred.

Committed as we are to the scientific attitude in empirical investigation, we must accept as historic fact what is sufficiently attested as such, recognizing at the same time that an important consideration in favor of this sufficient attestation is the possibility of explanation according to known laws, or, if not that, according to some discoverable new law. This does not mean that we assume that all events are totally and without remainder explicable in terms of rigid law; whether all or indeed any events are of this sort is a question final consideration of which we must refer to metaphysics. But we feel justified, in the light of our scientific presuppositions, in a rather sceptical attitude toward the idea of immediate divine interpositions in the realm of external nature.

And not on grounds of scientific procedure alone, or chiefly, do we object to this idea of arbitrary, exceptional, unmediated and therefore unpredictable "miracles"; our chief objection is practical and religious. We shall find that the problem of evil is exceedingly difficult to solve, or indeed impossible of solution, if we admit the even occasional occurrence of miracles of this sort. As Hegel remarks,* "Whether at the marriage at Cana the guests got a little more wine or a little less is a matter of absolutely no importance; nor is it any more essential to determine whether or not the man who had the withered hand was healed; for millions of men go about with withered and crippled limbs, whose limbs no man heals." What, indeed, should we have to think of God, if we had to believe that he once miraculously changed water into wine in order to satisfy the thirst of a few merry-makers, but has persistently refused to work any miracle to prevent even such unexampled atrocities as have recently occurred to hundreds of thousands of innocent and helpless victims of the systematic attempt to exterminate a race through deportation to the desert and through ruthless massacre? Is it too much to say that, in view of recent events, any such miracle as that of Cana is *religiously* incredible?

If, however, we seek to preserve the good essence of historical miracle-faith, let us define miracle as any event that has special

* "Philosophy of Religion," Eng. Tr., Vol. I, p. 219.

value to experimental religion, as revealing the divine presenc and activity, and that can be rationally interpreted as being objectively considered, a special, purposive act of God. Thi combines the subjective and the objective elements; when wha has special revelation-value for man coincides with what ca be interpreted as being a special activity of God's, we hav what may fairly be designated miracle. The objective element however, can be completely vindicated only in metaphysics.

What miracles, then, in this sense of the word, do actuall occur? Experimental religion at its best not only demands bu is assured of miracle enough (in this sense) for adequate revela tion of the living God. There is miracle enough for an answe to true prayer, in the sense of a dependable response to th right religious adjustment; miracle enough for special prov idence, in the sense of spiritual provision; miracle enough fo salvation, the regeneration of the individual, his reconciliatio with God, his progressive sanctification through the indwellin Holy Spirit; and there can be miracle enough, ultimately, fo the regeneration of society and the establishment of the king dom of God. Doubtless we should recognize that to some ex tent miracles in this sense of the term take place outside th bounds of our own religion; but the chief miracle up to th present is the miracle of the spiritual personality of Jesu Christ, the miracle of what God did in and through him an ultimately for the world, in response to the right religious ad justment on the part of this "well-beloved Son."

* We have used the term "miracle" in a special sense, as expressing a interest in preserving the good essence of historical miracle-faith; but it a fair question whether it is expedient to make much use of the term i this sense. Very possibly it is not, as ambiguity would almost inevitabl result, unless constant care were taken to explain the exact sense in whic the word was being used.

CHAPTER IV

Eschatological Deductions

Having now developed upon the basis of religious experience our theory of the nature of God and of his relation to man and to the world, we are in a position to draw some conclusions as to the future which seem to be logically involved in the view at which we have arrived. We shall speak of immortality, continued divine justice and mercy in the future life, "Heaven," and the future of the kingdom of God, or "Heaven on earth."

With reference to immortality we are now able to go much further than when we were simply setting forth the presuppositions of theology. Then we could only say that personal immortality was so highly desirable as to be imperative, and that, so far from its having been shown to be impossible, there were certain considerations which seemed to favor the hypothesis. In other words, we concluded that there ought to be and, so far as one could say, there might be a future life for the individual. But now, on the basis of the absolute goodness and absolute greatness of God, his sufficiency to meet every legitimate demand on the part of man, we are in a position to say not only that there ought to be and may be, but that there will be and is for every personal spirit an immortal future existence. What we presupposed tentatively, as practically imperative and theoretically admissible, we can now affirm as religiously certain. The person of adequate religious experience and logical reflection can say, "I know God, and I know he will not let me die; whatever may befall this instrument which I use temporarily (my body of flesh and blood), my real self will survive." We know enough about God to know that he can be trusted to appreciate the absolute worth of the human spirit, especially in view of its capacity for endless progress, and to provide for the undiminished conservation of this absolute value. Indeed

it may be said that to know God in immediate religious experience (i. e., "knowledge of acquaintance," as distinct from mere "knowledge about") is to know one's own spiritual life as being eternal, i. e., to experience the eternal life within one's self (*John* 17:3).

There are various ways in which religious reflection elaborates this fundamental assurance. God, known to the Christian as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," revealed in the unselfish love and service of Christ, can be depended upon to continue, in spite of physical death, the work he has begun, the work, namely, of moral salvation, of bringing many sons to perfection. He has imposed upon the individual as a duty the moral law of absolute perfection, and this, which is essentially an endless task, makes imperative the demand for unending opportunity. This unending opportunity, then, all well-intending wills, at least, must in justice be given (cf. Herrmann). Not until God has no more use for the individual, will the individual cease to exist (cf. Royce). But the moral will is always a means of incalculable future good, as well as an absolute good in itself, so that God must always have use for it. Moreover, all normal human beings, all real persons, either have or can develop a moral will—with the aid of moral experimental religion, if not otherwise.

The only limitation which should be placed upon the assertion of immortality is that if any person should become so degraded, either in the present or in the future life, that it became certain that moral progress or amendment was no longer possible, there would then seem to be no good purpose which could be served by the continuation of his existence, and God might be depended upon to end it. This measure of truth there would seem to be in the idea of conditional immortality. But if our view of the moral freedom involved in personal consciousness is correct, it does not appear that it ever is or will be certain beforehand that moral amendment or progress is no longer possible, given a continuation of personal consciousness. In view of which consideration the immortality of all persons may be asserted.

We have thus set forth adequate religious experience as being the logical basis of assurance of immortality. But there are

many who, in defect of their own religious experience, will feel more confident in view of the religious experience and assurance of eternal life achieved by some others, especially the "founder" of the Christian religion. Jesus had so cultivated acquaintance with God, the perfect Father, that although he looked forward to a violent death at the hands of his enemies, he was assured that he would rise triumphant in spite of the incident of physical death. He had not seen, yet he believed. And if his disciples had had keener spiritual insight, they too would have believed and been similarly assured without any apparition of a risen Jesus; even had they found the dead body of their Master in the tomb of the Arimathean, they ought to have been able to say, "He is not here; he is risen." But, after all, the real basis for their resurrection-faith was the enduement of the Spirit; and this, while the direct activity of the immanent God, was psychologically conditioned upon the religious influence of the historic Jesus before his crucifixion. Moreover, this assurance of Jesus, that God would give him victory over death and the grave, gives us assurance. We see that human life at its best is sure of immortality. It fortifies our souls in the immortal faith to know that what we tend to become assured of when we feel that we are spiritually at our best, is what Jesus was assured of, whose life was of all lives the best. Thus, without any loss of rational or spiritual autonomy, we may find support in the religious authority of the spirit of Jesus Christ.

And throughout their whole future existence God will deal with all individuals in absolute justice and mercy. By a strange caricature of the divine Person, people have often thought it incumbent upon them to believe that some of the attributes of God in relation to man are absolutely changed by the death of man's body. Whereas before one's death, God's justice, it is supposed, is held in abeyance, and he is all love and mercy, as soon as a man dies, God absolutely ceases to be merciful, and becomes simply (what is *called*) "just," (but what would be in reality unspeakably cruel). This is not the morally perfect God, whose acquaintance is made in experimental religion at its best. The fatherly God, whom we know best as revealed in the spirit of Christ and the "Christ-like" spirit, is self-consistent, essentially the same in his attitude toward his

children "yesterday, to-day and forever." He is and always will be "waiting to be gracious." There may be and probably will be need for discipline in the future life, and occasion for the seeking of divine grace and power for right conduct. And from what we know of God we may infer that there will be continued opportunity for right development, and divine grace for those who seek it in the right spirit. There will be judgment, it is true; as during the present life, so also after death, every day is and will be a day of divine judgment. Every person will be judged in absolute justice and dealt with in absolute holiness and love. This will mean continued discipline and in many cases bitter experiences, but the intended end in all cases will be the true well-being of the persons concerned. God will always be doing the best he can, even for those whom we speak of as "lost." Whatever hell (evil consequences of sin) there is that is felt to be such, is purgatorial in the divine intention. The very feeling of remorse will indicate the possibility of amendment still; and if a soul even in the lowest depths of hell should turn to God in sincere repentance, God would be neither merciful nor just if he were to refuse forgiveness and salvation.

This does not mean, of course, that the evil consequences of sin may not or do not commonly last much longer than the sin of the one who caused them. Evil consequences in the way of limitation of character and personality have to be outgrown by a gradual process, even when, through repentance and the grace of God, the conditions are most favorable. And evil consequences in the lives of others may go on and on indefinitely. In this connection the New Testament expression, "for the age of ages," is none too strong. And it must be forever regrettable that the sin was committed. And so, not only in "hell" and, as we know well enough, on earth is there suffering which in the intention of God is remedial, purgatorial; doubtless there will still be a touch of purgatory for some of those who, after death, will be, in many respects, in "heaven."

Now this notion of "future probation" and a purgatorial discipline in the future life is regarded by many as highly dangerous doctrine. It is true enough that the Catholic dogma

of purgatory was the occasion, first, of postponing to a future state that purgation from sin which ought to have been accomplished during the earthly life; and second, of the corrupt and corrupting sale of "indulgences," i. e., ecclesiastical remission, in return for a money payment, of the future purgatorial penalty of sin yet to be committed during the earthly life! Against these abuses and the dangerous doctrine that led to them the older Protestantism with much justification revolted. But, for the modern critical mind, to deny purgation and purgatorial discipline in the future life is more dangerous than to affirm it, since it tends almost inevitably to encourage atheism and irreligion. If the modern man cannot have a God he can respect and reverence, he will have none at all. On the other hand, however, whether one be a mediævalist, blindly trusting in the magical sacraments and dogmatic dicta of Mother Church, or a modernist, taking chances on the strength of the indulgent good-nature of a universal Father-God, if one deliberately postpones his purgatory to a future life instead of utilizing the experiences of the present life for his moral purgation, he will find himself in the future life not in a mere purgatory, but in a hell of moral degradation, an "outer darkness" of alienation from all that is best in personal associations, a state of remorse and shame and fear of further evil still to come. But the same evil consequences may be hell or purgatory, according to the spirit in which they are taken.

"Heaven" stands, in the language of religion, for the transcendent reality and future realization of the ideal. Naturally, therefore, its content has varied greatly according to differences in the interests and experiences of those cherishing the ideal. Thus the ancient Egyptian looked forward to a heaven of farming under ideal conditions, where the Nile never failed to overflow and harvests were always bountiful; the ancient Teuton, to Valhalla, with its endless round of eating, drinking and fighting; and the North American Indian, to the Happy Hunting Ground. Intermediate between the two extremes of the Buddhist ideal of Nirvana, or rest through extinction of desire, and the Mohammedan ideal of satisfaction through the gratification of all desires in Paradise, however sensual those desires might be, the essentially Christian ideal is that of rest

through the extinction of immoral desire, and joy in the progressive satisfaction of every right desire. But traditional Christianity has not always given to this general idea a content such as can be satisfactory to the modern mind. According to the mediæval mind "Heaven" was a sort of ideal monastery, with nothing but distinctly religious interests and activities. To the Puritans and older evangelicals it was a sort of ideal meeting-house or "protracted meeting"—"where congregations ne'er break up, and Sabbaths never end." And to many within the Christian community, as well as to the oppressed and over-worked in all ages, "Heaven" appealed as being that ideal abode "where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest." And so for many there grew up what G. B. Foster has called "that worst of all dualisms, joyless labor here and laborless joy hereafter."

The earliest expression of the Christian ideal of Heaven we find, of course, in the New Testament. But many of the statements we find there are obviously figurative. White robes, crowns, palms, harps and the like, are symbolic representations of purity, power, victory, joy and harmony. Other expressions, although somewhat narrowly related to the person of Christ, can be taken more literally, as depicting a realizable ideal, and can be accepted as adequately assured on the basis of our empirical knowledge of God. Thus to be "with Christ" may be taken as representing the best companionship, to be "like Christ" as signifying ideal character, and the statement, "his servants shall serve him," as indicating a life of activity and social service. Doubtless this distinctively Christian ideal needs to be supplemented by the inclusion of the Greek ideal, voiced by Socrates, of continued intellectual activity and exploration of the realms of truth. Art is already represented, perhaps, in the idea of a vast heavenly symphony. But the main phases of the Christian ideal are Christian fellowship, Christian character and Christian activity, and upon each of these we may offer a further brief comment.

In connection with the idea of social fellowship the question is sometimes raised as to whether there will be recognition of earthly friends in the future life. To this the answer we seem *justified* in making upon the basis of our view of God is that

there will be such recognition; otherwise some of the greatest of all spiritual values, those of friendship, would be lost forever. To the objection that this would involve memory of the earthly life, and consequently much vain regret and sorrow, the reply is that in an active future existence, full of interest on its own account, and full of hope for the future triumph of righteousness in all individual and social life, memory of the earthly life would be, as our present memory is, selective only: we should tend to recall only what we had some practical occasion to think of at the particular time, or what our minds could dwell upon with satisfaction.

With reference to the ideal of moral perfection, it seems absurd, in view of what we know of the gradual development of character as the outcome of conduct, to suppose that the Christian ideal of perfection will be completely realized immediately after death by all who can claim to have adopted the Christian principle of life. We shall doubtless begin our next life with the characters with which we end this one. The consummation of the Christian salvation, or deliverance from moral evil, is to be looked for in the future state of existence, it is true, but that "state" is to be a dynamic one, a state of eternal progress. If life is to appeal to one as worth while, there must always be something yet to achieve. To be sure, liberation from the gross physical body may mean greater freedom for expression on the part of the good will, without the resistance from bodily habit. And yet he who would begin his heavenly career with the "treasures" of good character and desirable friendships—friendship with men and with God—must begin to lay them up while still on earth. He who would enter upon a heavenly state of existence at death must take his purgatory during the present life.

And in connection with the ideal of social service it may be remarked that notwithstanding the probability that in the future life there will be, at least temporarily, between different social groups a "great gulf fixed" by differences of principle, sympathy and interest, this will not necessarily be a spatial gulf; and it is to be hoped and expected that those whose minds have been trained and whose wills are essentially right will not be kept from doing educational and missionary work among

those whose souls are less advanced. Such an arrangement would be highly desirable on both sides, and a hint in the direction of something of the sort is contained in the traditional Christian belief that Jesus, after his death on the cross, preached to "spirits in prison."

If the question be raised as to just where heaven is, the simple answer is that we do not know. The future life must be lived somewhere, of course, but the question of spatial location is not the most important. Like hell and purgatory, heaven is not a place but an experience. There are places enough in God's universe where heaven might be. The one suggestion we seem most able, in the light of science, to deny is that the future life will be a reincarnation on earth. A scientific understanding of the principles of heredity and of the process of character-formation seems absolutely to preclude this notion.

Eschatology includes, or ought to include, besides a series of doctrines about the *post-mortem* existence of the individual, a consideration of what is to be expected or hoped in connection with the future of the race upon this planet. Here the central thought is the "Kingdom of God," an ideal state of society in which God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven—in short, heaven on earth. It is at this point perhaps more than at any other that traditional Christian teaching requires revision. The pious Jew associated his ideal for the future with a Jewish world-kingdom, whose capital should be Jerusalem and whose king the divinely appointed "Messiah." It was but natural that when Jews became Christians they should retain the essentials of this ideal, and so we find the doctrine that Jesus, who had been chosen of God to be the Messiah, but who had been wickedly crucified, had been raised from the dead by the power of God, and was to return with divine power and glory to vanquish his enemies and establish his Messianic world-kingdom with a renovated Jerusalem as its centre. As generations and centuries elapsed, and still the Messiah did not return, a division of opinion manifested itself between the pre-millennialists on the one hand and the post-millennialists on the other. The former still tried to hold to the belief that the visible return of Christ was to be expected any moment, and certainly before and as a necessary preliminary to the predicted millennium of righteous-

ness and peace. The post-millennialists, however, maintained that, through the triumph of Christian influences, and especially through the preaching of the Christian gospel, the world would gradually pass into a millennial reign of the Spirit of Christ in righteousness and world-wide peace, after which Christ would return to judge the living and the dead. The dilemma in which the Christian traditionalist found himself with reference to this question was that while premillennialism was more in accord with certain explicit statements in the Scriptures, post-millennialism did more honor to the conquering power of the spiritual forces of Christianity, as distinguished from the merely spectacular, and altogether seemed more sane and reasonable.

But a scientific understanding of the world we live in and of the history of the Jewish-Christian way of thinking produces the conviction that there is no adequate ground for either pre-millennialism or post-millennialism as a whole. The idea of an imminent visible return of Jesus as the world-conquering and world-judging Messiah is seen to be simply a relic of Jewish nationalistic and pre-scientific ways of thinking. Instead of either of these systems of thought the modern Christian mind is seen to demand a non-adventist view, the beginnings of which are to be found in the Johannine literature of the New Testament,* and which in its present-day form looks for the progressive domination of individuals and society by the moral and religious principles of essential Christianity, i. e., by "the Spirit of Christ," until at last, as scientists prognosticate, millions of years from now this earth will have become so cold as to be no longer a possible habitation for the human race—unless in the meantime the life of the race on the earth should be cut short by some as yet unforeseeable disaster.

The ideal for the future of the race upon earth includes many elements, such as the advancement of science and culture; biological and hygienic well-being, based upon scientific eugenics and sanitation; economic welfare, including the elimination of extreme poverty and probably also of extreme wealth in the hands of individuals; a maximum of co-operation with only the minimum of competition which is necessary as a stimulus

* See *John* 14 to 16 and I *John*.

to efficiency; industrial peace based upon righteous relations between capital and labor; international peace based upon righteous international relations and adequate world-government; also a "moral equivalent for war." These and kindred ideals, however, can be guaranteed as to be realized in large measure within a reasonable time, only if, in addition to the enlightenment of science and the pressure of biological necessity, recourse is constantly had to an essentially Christian individual and social morality, which, in turn, can be adequately guaranteed only by the cultivation of an essentially Christian type of experimental religion. In other words, only an increased revelation, or presence of God on earth ruling in the wills and lives of men, can bring in the fulness of "heaven on earth." And as the social instrument whose function it is to facilitate the realization of this ideal, we have the church, which can only prove its claim to be the true church by its efficiency in propagating the type of experimental religion which is most dynamically related as means to the kingdom of God on earth as end.

One further point in connection with eschatology remains to be discussed, viz., the relation between the ideals of "heaven" and "heaven on earth." In the Jewish type of thought the two ideals were unified by making the kingdom of heaven on earth the ultimate end, and the state of the righteous dead prior to the spectacular inauguration of the Messiah's reign simply intermediate and preliminary. But the modern Christian ideal, superficially considered at least, seems to fall apart in dualistic fashion into two disconnected ideals, viz., heaven for the individual, and the kingdom of God on earth for the race. But the disconnection is not ultimate. The desired unification is secured when this earth is regarded as God's public school or kindergarten for the human spirit, in which he gives us the opportunity of learning certain fundamental lessons, before we pass on to the higher school in which the next stage of our education is to be accomplished. From this point of view there is an answer to the misgivings commonly felt by social workers with reference to the ideas of immortality and heaven. All that the most zealous social reformer can justly demand is called for by the requirement that this earth be made a good kindergarten in which the immortal human spirit is to begin the never-to-be-

ended process of its education and development. Moreover the social workers themselves have special need of the perspective gained by keeping in view the endless life beyond, if their ideals for the humanity they would help are not to suffer deterioration.

CHAPTER V

The Problem of Evil (Theodicy)*

Our final topic under theological theory is the question as to whether our view of the nature and character of God and of his relations to man and the universe will stand the test of criticism in face of the evils which exist in the world. The most insistent problem with regard to evil is undoubtedly the practical problem—how to get rid of it. But the more theoretical problem of evil—the problem as to how, in the presence of so much evil in the world, it is not unreasonable to believe in the existence of a God both great enough and good enough for the religious needs of man—this, too, becomes in the end a practical problem, since the vitality of a theistic faith for thoughtful people depends in no small measure upon their finding a tolerable intellectual adjustment at this point.

This religious problem of evil is one in face of which some systems of theology simply collapse in self-contradiction. This is true, for example, of the theology which affirms on the one hand the absolute moral perfection and absolute omnipotence of God and his complete predetermination of all facts and events, the evil as well as the good, and yet maintains on the other hand that for the moral evil which has come into existence in human life men will be punished with inconceivably severe and absolutely endless torments. Well may the problem of evil be given up in such a system as insoluble.

In undertaking to consider the question as to whether any self-consistent view is possible which shall at once meet the requirements of our empirically founded religious assurances and square with the experienced facts of evil, it is easily evident that certain doctrines are virtually excluded from the outset.

* A part of this chapter reproduces (with some slight modifications) a part of one of the chapters of my recently published booklet, "God in a World at War" (London: George Allen and Unwin).

This is particularly true of that exaggerated and misguided optimism which would maintain that even at present "all's well with the world," that the world we live in is in all respects the best possible world—in short that "whatever is, is best." But on the other hand our theological theory would suggest the question as to whether any view is not unduly pessimistic if it holds concerning the world (at least in its general constitution and as it is dependent upon the willed activity of God) that it is not a good kind of world—or even the best possible kind—in which to have man begin his development. In distinction from both of these positions, the unduly pessimistic and the inconsiderately optimistic, the thesis we would undertake to defend is this: that while this world is far from being as yet the best possible world, nevertheless in view of its general constitution it may be regarded as the best possible *kind* of world in which to have man begin his development, and that the evils which exist in the world furnish no good reason for abandoning belief in a God who is both good enough and great enough to meet every real religious need.

The best possible kind of world must be a world of law and order. This seems a pretty obvious assertion with which to begin. The physical world, as a world of law, gives all living beings a steady and dependable platform upon which to stand. To its uniform processes the organism may adjust its activities and learn to make habitual the most favorable adjustments. Indeed, if the world were not thus essentially dependable in its processes, it would seem that no real or permanent progress in the constitution or activities of organic beings could be looked for. No habit could be any better than any other habit; no character any better than any other character.

But the ruthless processes of natural law, admitting of no exceptions in order to spare the individual organism or any other object, inevitably tend and not infrequently lead to the injury or even to the violent and premature death of organic beings, human as well as other, and to the destruction of objects which have value for living beings. The lives of men and animals and the existence of objects of value are exposed from time to time to various "accidents," in all of which the impartial, law-abiding processes of nature are involved. Earthquakes,

volcanic eruptions, tempests, floods, fires, extremes of heat and cold, diseases of all sorts—these and other disaster-bringing events are incidental to the world we live in being a world of undeviating natural law.

Now it is all very well to enlarge upon the desirability of a world of law and order, but would it not be well if there were a way of intervening in this world of mechanical and chemical law, for the guarding of life and objects of value from the injury and destruction that would otherwise befall them? And in order that this intervention should not break up the orderliness and dependableness of the world, and thus lead to confusion and stagnation, might it not be well that it should be not a process of suspending the laws of the physical world, but one of introducing new factors whose processes would themselves be according to their own laws and uniformities?

This may seem a good deal to ask—an intervention in a world of law, which would yet be no breach of law, but itself the exemplification of law, a sort of law-abiding miracle—but as a matter of fact it is just this which we find in existence in the world in which we live. In the processes of sensation we see this law-abiding miracle for the protection of the living organism and its possessions. Sight, hearing, sensations of taste, smell, touch, heat and cold, pleasant sensations and sensations of pain—these are the desired protective processes made, as it were, to order. Miraculous as they are from the standpoint of the merely mechanical, chemical and physiological, they are nevertheless themselves perfectly orderly and law-abiding, being definitely conditioned upon certain events in the nervous system, and exhibiting certain inner uniformities (psychical laws) of their own.

The serviceable function of sense-processes is well known. Sight, hearing and the sense of smell not only enable men and animals to avoid many enemies and threatening dangers; they also make it possible for them to secure their own food and the other necessities of life. Sensations of sight, smell and taste help to identify wholesome food-substances. Feelings of pleasure are associated with the activities involved in satisfying appetites which in the main operate to preserve the life of the individual or of the race. And one of the most indispensable of sensations

is the sensation of pain in its various forms and combinations. Where quick or decisive reversal of conditions is necessary, if injury to the organism is to be avoided, a special sort of sensation, sharply stimulating to change, is called for; and this is what we have, as a blessing in disguise, in the sensation of pain. If the burning of the flesh, exposure to extreme heat or cold, bodily exhaustion, hunger, thirst, wounds and conditions of acute disease were not normally accompanied by sensations of pain, all the "higher" and more complicated forms of animal life would soon be killed off by the ruthless operation of natural forces. Indeed, in the light of the now well-established evolutionary view of the origin of species, the human species included, we can say that a world without any pain in it would have been a world in which man could never have appeared; his animal ancestors would have been killed off long before the biological conditions for the appearance of the human species had been reached.

It seems clear, then, that a world in which there occur, in a law-abiding way, sensations of many sorts, including sensations of pain, is a much more desirable kind of world, from the standpoint of the well-being of physical life and all that depends upon it, than any world of physical law without such processes of sensation. But it may be objected that in this law-abiding character of sensation there is involved a good deal of pain which is not of immediate use to physical life. For example, just because, when certain bodily conditions exist, certain sensations appear, there is often much pain in connection with incurable disease, and even in curable cases pain may continue for some tlme after the appropriate remedy has been applied. Moreover, biologically necessary operations are often accompanied by intense suffering. Of course, it is to be recognized that pain which is not directly and immediately valuable for the life of the body may still prove, in the case of man, valuable for moral discipline. Theoretically, it would seem, this ought to be true of all human pain ultimately. Besides, most systems of education and reform provide for the deliberate addition of pain of one sort or another, for the sake of correction and discipline. Thus much pain that is not *immediately and directly* useful for the life of the body may come to have biological

value *ultimately and indirectly.* And yet, when all has been said, it would seem that there is, by virtue of the law-abiding processes of sensation, a good deal of suffering, human and animal, which, it is not unreasonable to suppose, the world would be much better without. While it is not easy to prove that any human suffering will be absolutely useless, there can be little doubt that much of it is needless.

Would it not be well, then, it may be asked, if there were a way of intervening so as to regulate the life of sense, and especially sensations of pain, in order that needless pain might be reduced to a minimum? It would be desirable, however, on general principles, that any such intervening process should not involve a suspension of the laws of sensation, and that it should proceed according to laws of its own. This amounts to a demand, once more, for a "law-abiding miracle"; but it is a demand which we find already granted. Just such a factor of modification in the life of sense, intervening without suspending the laws of sensation and in a way that is according to laws of its own, we find to exist in the activity of *thought.*

Thought observes sensations and their conditions, remembers them, and anticipates future possibilities, probabilities and certainties. Such thought leads to knowledge of the conditions of pain, and when combined with consideration of what pain, on the one hand, is valuable for guidance or discipline, and what pain, on the other hand, is unnecessary, this knowledge tends to lessen the amount of needless suffering. By taking thought man can anticipate and avoid unnecessary and disagreeable experiences. For example, he can learn to avoid the pains that follow excess in the pursuit of pleasure. By "taking pains" enough to study the causes of undesirable effects, he has been able, on behalf of others as well as for himself, to provide against very much greater future pains. The discovery of anæsthetics is simply a conspicuous example of the law-abiding intervention of thought in the processes of sensation.

But thinking is a means of intervening, not only to prevent pain and modify other sense-experiences for the better; it can work against physical disasters directly. Especially in the overcoming of disease, scientific investigation has accomplished

wonderful results, and it is probably not too much to say that science has made it possible for twice as many people to live twice as long as formerly. And science, of course, is not the whole of thought, but only its more methodical development.

But while thought is a most important means of intervening for the prevention of needless suffering and for the more effective safeguarding of life and property, it must be admitted that it is not always as successful as could be wished. In fact, there is evil in the realm of thought, intellectual evil in the form of ignorance and positive error, and this further complicates our original problem. Sometimes error as to the ends to be pursued, or as to the means to be employed, or mere ignorance and vacuity of mind may cause an immense amount of unnecessary suffering and disaster to life and objects of value. Not only is there often a failure, through ignorance, to remedy remediable evils; there is often the imposition of additional suffering and destruction of life as the direct result of erroneous ideas. Religious persecution is a case in point.

But not only are ignorance and error, as results of inadequate thought, themselves evils and the occasion of further evils in the way of suffering and disaster. Exact, scientific thinking may serve to make injurious processes all the more potent and disastrous. Science serves to make crime more skilful and to make war so destructive as to threaten the future existence of the race.

Does it not seem desirable, then, that there should be some intervention in the life of thought, such as might direct it into beneficent channels, making information more accurate and complete, and the whole process of thought more effective for good? No doubt such intervention would be desirable, provided it did not unduly interfere with the dependable order of the universe in the realm of the physical, or in the life of sensation or thought, but took place only under definite conditions and within narrow and discoverable limits.

This third call for normal "miracle" has also been anticipated in the constitution of human nature. In the human will, or capacity for voluntary attention, we find a way of intervening for the direction and concentration of thought, so that ignorance and error may in the normal and dependable way be progres-

sively overcome, and the whole thought process directed towards eliminating needless suffering and disaster and realizing in a more positive way the truest human ideals.

This miracle of human free will carries with it immense possibilities of making the world a better place for man to live in. Our doctrine that the world in its general constitution is the best possible kind of world does not mean that it is as good a world as it ever can be. While remaining a world of physical law, and one in which there occur the orderly miracles of sensation and thought, our world may be made, by virtue of human free agency, a much better world than it is or ever has been. If all human wills were as good and efficient as, by virtue of their freedom, they might be, thought would become so much more effective for good, that the life of sense would be so unified for the better, and physical evils so guarded against, as ultimately to make the conditions of life on the earth in most respects almost ideal. Apart from the final inevitableness of physical death—a fact which involves problems which we must presently consider—it may be said that, if only the wills of men were as well-disposed as they might be, there would be little or nothing to regret, ultimately, in such injurious accidents and biologically unnecessary sufferings as might still persist through man's not yet having learned how to prevent them. Is it not better that man should have the training in mind and character involved in finding out how to combat disease and other causes of pain and disaster than that by some arbitrary and purely magical miracle these evils should be removed without any human effort, and so without any training of the human intellect or will? Moreover, the possibility of training in fortitude involved in the facing of unavoidable danger, and in the endurance of unpreventable pain, is surely not a thing to be regretted. Neither does it seem desirable that the race should be without any such training in social sympathy and helpfulness as is made possible by the fact of actual or threatened suffering and loss. Nor, finally, would it be well for humanity to be without the socially unifying spectacle of individuals, voluntarily and for the good of others, undertaking courses of action which necessarily involve great suffering for themselves.

With the exception of the problem involved in the inevi-

table death of the individual, our general problem of evil might now be regarded as solved, if this *free* will of man, to which we have referred, were always at the same time a *good* will. But the very fact of free will, which is the necessary condition of good choices, and consequently of the development of moral character and a good will, also makes evil choices possible,* with their many unfortunate consequences, including the development of immoral character and an evil will. Moreover, this evil will tends to make evil choice habitual, and so to aggravate its own evil condition. Besides, moral evil is very potent in increasing the other kinds of evil to which we have referred, viz., needless injury and disaster to life and its values, needless suffering, and needless ignorance and error. Through man's inhumanity to man, the world is far from being the best possible world. Universal and permanent good will in man would make heaven on earth, but the evil human will has gone far—in war, for instance—toward making hell on earth.

And yet what is desirable is not the taking away of human freedom of choice and action. Other things being equal, a world of human free agency is the best possible kind of world. Without it moral personality would be impossible. Man would be a mere mechanical puppet, some of whose actions were mysteriously accompanied by processes of completely predetermined sensation and thought. But a world of moral freedom is one in which it is possible for man to learn the right way of life, if not through the preferred way of anticipating possible evil and avoiding it, then through the bitter consequences of thoughtless or wilful wrong-doing. The case, then, is similar to that of intellectual evil. There is danger in free thought and investigation, lest one fall into error, with its unfortunate consequences. There is danger, similarly, in free choice and action, lest one fall into sin and its many consequent evils. But it is better to think than not to be able to think, and better to choose than not be able to choose. The possibility of moral personality and of continual progress towards an ever-developing moral ideal is without doubt worth the risk of individual choices of moral evil.

* How it comes that beings that are free to choose between good and evil sometimes choose evil, not simply through ignorance, but even against their best moral judgment, will be dealt with toward the end of this chapter.

But in view of the seriousness of moral evil and its consequences, and considering the costliness and uncertain efficacy of learning to do right through experiencing the painful consequences of doing wrong, it seems highly desirable that there should be yet another way of intervening, this time in the life of the human will, to guard against this peculiarly serious form of evil, viz., human sin. But it is desirable also that this intervention should occur without destroying the orderliness of nature or of the life of sense and thought, and without interfering with the freedom of human choice and action. This again may seem a great deal to ask, but it is not too much. Provision has been made for just this sort of normal intervention, in the miracle of moral salvation through the right sort of religious dependence. This experience of salvation from sin through the right adjustment of the life to God is not forced upon anyone; human freedom is not violated, and happily so, for there could be no moral salvation if it were. But if all individuals were to fulfil as fully as possible the religious conditions of salvation from sin, the world we live in would come to seem to us so nearly the best possible world, that it would be easy to believe it to be the best possible *kind* of world for the first stages of man's development. If, then, the world is not what it would be if man were to make as full use as he might of the source of moral renewal in religious experience at its best, the fault is his own. The world as a world of human freedom, even in the matter of choosing or rejecting moral salvation, is a better kind of world than one of any other imaginable sort would be, whether it were a world in which developing creatures could never need salvation, because they were not free and so could not sin, or a world in which there was sin but no provision for salvation, or a world in which an external "salvation," so called, was forced upon the individual without his choice or against his will, and so at the expense of his moral personality.

Religious evil, whether in the form of undesirable developments of religion, or in that of "unbelief" or irreligion, is reducible either to ignorance and error, or to sin (including all such as is peculiarly or at least primarily sin against God), or, it may be, to both intellectual and moral evil. Hence it presents no radically new problem.

But there is still another element of the problem of evil which would remain to exercise our minds, no matter how fully moral evil were overcome through educative discipline and religious dependence. There is the problem involved in the universal and inevitable fact of physical death. However the good will with the aid of scientific thought may guard man against violent and premature death, the limit of the power to live is nevertheless soon reached. Every human individual, however valuable he may be as a means of human betterment or as an end in himself, must ultimately part with his material body and disappear from the earthly life of the race.

Now so far as the well-being of the human race on earth is concerned, it is no doubt better that all must ultimately die than that there should be no such thing as bodily death. If the latter were the case, the earth would soon be full of old people, there would be no room for new generations, and the resulting racial stagnation may be left to the imagination to depict. If only it were possible to be assured that all the essential values of individual personality were somehow conserved, in spite of the death of the body, it would be possible to maintain that even a world in which physical death is universally inevitable is still the best possible kind of world in which to have the human individual pass the first stage of his development.

But is it possible to find a reasonable basis for believing that the death of the body does not mean the end of those values that are bound up inseparably with personal existence? What is called for is one more normal and universally dependable miracle, viz., the miracle of personal immortality. But we have already found adequate cause to believe in the immortality of the individual.* Hence we would conclude that even a world in which the ultimate physical death of all human beings is inevitable may still be, so far at least as that is concerned, the best possible kind of world to be the scene of the first stage of man's development. The death of the body may be but the liberation of the spirit to enter upon a further and possibly more untrammelled stage in its development.

We have thus indicated the solution of the religious problem of evil, the problem as to how the fact of evil in the world is

* See Part I, Chapter IV, and Part III, Chapter IV, *supra*.

compatible with the sufficient greatness and goodness of God. It may be well to summarize briefly the main course of our discussion. A physical world of absolutely dependable law and order is a better basis for the development of physical life than any alternative that can be suggested. But the working out of the natural processes in such a world tends to prove disastrous at times to physical life and to objects having value for life. A means of guarding against such disasters without violating physical law is to be found in the facts of sensation, including pain. Sensation itself occurs according to law, and consequently under certain circumstances there tend to be instances of needless pain. A means of guarding against such needless pain, and also against disaster to life, is to be found in thought. The processes of thought occur according to psychical law, and consequently under certain circumstances there tends to be erroneous thought. A means of guarding against error is to be found in the capacity of directing attention, within necessary limits and yet in a free and creative way. This free agency, however, while indispensable for the development of moral personality, also necessarily involves the possibility of moral evil, which when it becomes actual, carries with it a train of error, needless suffering and disaster or injury to life and objects of value. A means of guarding effectively against moral evil is to be found in the religious experience of moral salvation, an experience which occurs without violation of the laws of nature or of mind, and without violating the free agency of man. But in spite of these normal miracles of sensation, thought, free will, and the religious experience of moral salvation, there remains the inevitable fact of physical death. The complete solution of the problem of evil thus requires the postulate of the further miracle of the soul's survival of bodily death—a miracle assurance of which may be found in a type of religious experience which is universally valid and accessible to all who are willing to fulfil the necessary conditions. These are the miracles we can be assured of, and they are the only ones we need to be assured of to be able to maintain that however far, through man's misuse of freedom, the world may fall short of being, as yet, the best possible world, it is nevertheless the best possible kind of world to be the scene of the first stages of man's

development. And through man's co-operation with God, undertaken in dependence upon God, this best possible kind of world may be brought more and more into conformity with the ideal of the best possible world.

There is one further aspect of the general problem of evil which has figured largely in traditional theology, viz., the problem of the *origin* of evil, and especially of the origin of moral evil in the race. According to pre-evolutionary theories the first man was created mature and endowed with a "liberty of indifference," i. e., with power to choose without any previous bias toward either good or evil. Man having under these circumstances chosen evil and having thereby experienced a moral "fall," the obvious explanation was that he was induced to do so by some extraneous influence, tempted and persuaded into sin by some radically evil spirit, or devil. The existence of such a being having been posited, reflection clothed him with attributes almost of omnipresence and omnipotence, pictured him as absolutely evil, and tended to regard all evils as his work, making him responsible, as the "prince of the power of the air," for unfavorable weather conditions, and thinking of him as the objective source of all temptation to moral evil.

But science and philosophical reflection have been largely instrumental in cutting the ground from under this belief in a personal devil. The natural causation of evils is too well known for the hypothesis of a transcendent and well-nigh omnipotent creator of evil to be any longer necessary. As a later and practically truer substitute for the primitive view that God was the author of deception and moral evil, the idea of a devil had temporary religious value. But it no longer seems reasonable to explain physical evils as due to an evil spirit and physical goods as due to a good spirit. The physical universe is too unitary to admit of any such radical antagonism, and anyway the question as to whether a physical event—the weather for instance—is good or bad is relative to the individual. And in the light of the natural history of evil, together with that afforded by the evolutionary theory, the mystery about the racial origin of moral evil largely disappears. The first human beings were not created mature and without predispositions. On the contrary the race, as well as the individual, began in infancy; it

inherited tendencies and developed habits which, while appropriate enough to the conditions of animal life, could not be regarded as satisfactory to the gradually increasing insight of developing humanity. The consequence was, naturally enough, a struggle between the old impulse and the new ideal, with the not very surprising result that often, through spiritual inertia, action followed habit or instinct as the line of least resistance, in spite of the protest of the best judgment of the individual. No reference to the agency of any transcendent evil spirit is needed to account for either the beginning or the subsequent history of moral evil. Temptation to evil is explained psychologically, without any need of introducing the concept of a transcendent tempter.

At this point, however, a further question may arise. If the scientific explanation of the origin of evil, and especially of temptation and sin, does away with the necessity of a devil, why does not the scientific explanation of the origin of good, and especially of the religious experience of salvation, do away with the necessity of God? Obviously, to begin with, because our supposed need of the devil was theoretical, rather than practical, whereas our need of God is primarily and fundamentally practical. We *thought* we needed to posit the devil to account for temptation; perhaps, too, there has been an emotional need for some such concept, man's action has sometimes appeared so inhuman and devilish; but our need of God is not only theoretical and emotional; it is as imperative as the need of righteousness, of moral salvation. Moreover, as we have seen, the Object of religious dependence is not merely postulated, albeit with an absolute imperative; in what we take to be experimental religion at its best the claim made is that he has been found, his acquaintance has been made, and it has not yet appeared that critical reflection has refuted the claim.

From what has been said the impression may be gained that the whole question of belief in a devil is a matter of merely theoretical concern. But while the need or supposed need of the devil in religion has been theoretical, and only he who has desired to resort to magic for anti-social purposes has felt any need of the Satanic power in practice, the harm done by belief in a devil has been not theoretical alone, but practical as well.

It is true enough that the question as to where temptation comes from is comparatively unimportant; temptation cannot make one sinful, but only the yielding to it. And so long as the religious individual does not feel called upon to propitiate the devil, or to divide his dependence between God and the devil, acceptance of the traditional notion of a great transcendent spirit of evil may be fairly innocuous. But ethical monotheism can hardly be recognized as safe, so long as the traditional belief in a devil remains. In religiously interested and reflective minds questions are almost sure to arise as to the relation of God to the devil. Did God create the devil an absolutely and hopelessly evil spirit? If so, how can God himself be regarded as absolutely good? But if God did not create the devil as such, why does he not destroy this now absolutely and hopelessly evil spirit? Since God does not do this, must it not be either because he cannot, and so is not absolutely great, or because he will not, and so is not absolutely good?

But on the basis of religious experience at its best we know not only that God is, but that he is perfect in character and absolutely adequate in power. Hence we know also that the devil does not exist.

APPENDIX

A SKETCH OF THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION, SHOWING THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY AS AN EMPIRICAL SCIENCE TO PHILOSOPHY *

Analysis of Contents

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* Reproduced, with some omissions, additions and slight modifications, from "Mind," N. S. No. 110, April, 1919.

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   4. Critical Monism.

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   3. Dualism.
   4. Critical Monism.

H. The Problem of Good and Evil.
   1. Extreme Optimism.
   2. Extreme Pessimism.
   3. Dualism.
   4. Critical Monism.

Philosophy differs from science as wisdom differs from information. Science is systematized information. In its most characteristic form it is description of fact. Abstract sciences, e. g., pure mathematics, furnish information as to what *would be, if* certain assumptions were according to fact. Normative sciences, e. g., scientific (as distinct from philosophical) logic, ethics, æsthetics and economics, furnish information as to what *must be, if* certain ends are to be attained. Fundamentally, all is information, description.

Philosophy is more than science, as wisdom is more than information. But a sound philosophy will make use of science, as it is the part of wisdom to make use of available information. And yet, however far or fully the sciences may develop, there will always be a place for wisdom in the estimation of values at least, and doubtless also in the framing and weighing of theories as to the ultimate nature of reality.

All philosophy, then, may be divided into two main parts, viz., criticism (philosophy of values) and metaphysics (philosophy of reality). Some of the branches of critical philosophy are relatively simple, dealing with the nature of ideals. Thus philosophical logic deals with the nature of consistency and of truth, philosophical ethics with the nature of moral goodness, philosophical æsthetics with the nature of beauty, and philosophical economics with the nature of economic well-being as a human ideal. But other branches of critical philosophy are relatively complex, dealing as they do with selected phases of human life. One such branch is epistemology, or the philosophy of knowledge, which, while it makes use of science, particularly psychology, and contains metaphysical elements, still is in the main a critique of the knowledge-value of human perception and thought. Other relatively complex branches of critical philosophy are the philosophy of history, the philosophy of the state, and the philosophy of religion.

Until recently what has gone by the name of "philosophy of religion" has been mainly metaphysical. It has been *religion's philosophy*—the religious man's theory of reality. More recently, however, the name has been used to denote a branch of philosophical criticism; it has meant *philosophizing about religion.*

Now all thinkers, whether believing or sceptical from the religious point of view, can agree on the possibility of the philosophy of religion as a branch of critical philosophy. Such a discipline would undertake to consider, as critically as possible, the question of the value of religion for life, including its value for knowledge of reality. The question as to whether there ought to be included in the philosophy of religion a metaphysical part, embodying religion's philosophy of reality, will depend upon the outcome of that part of the critical philosophy of *religion* which has to do with the value of religion for knowledge of

reality. If the outcome is negative, unfavorable to the validity of "religious knowledge," the metaphysical part will be omitted. An example of this is found in Höffding's *Philosophy of Religion*, which consists of three main parts, viz., Epistemological, Psychological, and Ethical. But if the outcome of the philosophy of religious knowledge should prove to be positive, i. e., favorable to religion, the metaphysical part will naturally and very properly be included. In the latter case the philosophy of religion would logically fall into two main divisions, viz., the critical and the metaphysical, in each of which divisions there would be included two main subdivisions, setting forth, respectively, the empirical basis and the philosophical superstructure.

The empirical basis for the critical philosophy of religion is to be found mainly in the history, psychology and sociology of religion. Here the matters of chief concern are the essential nature of religion, and the development of religion, with special reference to the concept of religious progress, or movement in the direction of an ideal goal.

The question of the essence of religion presupposes a definition of essence. The essence (strictly, the *good* essence) of any historical or experiential *quantum* is that in the facts which it is essential to retain in order to realize some valid ideal—provided this selected element can retain its vitality when separated from all which it is essential for the same purpose to exclude. Roughly speaking, it is the greatest common measure of the actual and the ideal. The bad essence of anything is that which it is essential to exclude, if the ideal is to be realized. What has a good essence is essentially good; but what has no good essence, i. e., no good element which can retain its vitality when separated from all objectionable elements with which it may have been associated, is essentially bad.*

In dealing with the question of the essence of religion, it may be well to distinguish between that in historical and experiential religion which it is *most* essential to retain (the quintessence of religion), and what, in addition to this, may be considered essential. And it may be suggested that the quintessence of religion is *devotion to a divine Ideal*, i. e., to an ideal regarded as worthy of man's absolute devotion. (All but extreme pessimists will agree that this is a *good* essence.) But the essence of religion also includes (whether it be considered a good or a bad essence) *dependence upon a divine Being*, i. e., upon a being regarded as worthy of man's absolute dependence. Devotion to an ideal regarded as divine, we may call *fundamental religion*. Dependence upon a being regarded as divine we may call *experimental religion*.

* For a fuller discussion of essence, see my article, entitled "What is the Christian Religion?" in the "Harvard Theological Review," Vol. VII, No. 1 (Jan., 1914).

(The highest conceivable unity of fundamental and experimental religion would be where the divine Ideal is found in the divine Being. But if the Ideal is already real, how, it may be asked, can it still be an ideal? The answer would be found in the conception of the divine *will*, the content of which is the highest good, but whose purposes have not yet been fully realized. Whether or not such a unification of fundamental and experimental religion is rationally possible is a question which would belong to the metaphysical part of the philosophy of religion.)

The main problems of the philosophy of religion center about experimental religion, since there is little room for question as to the value and validity of religion in the sense of devotion to the Ideal. And so, before passing from this question of the essence of religion, let us consider what further, in addition to the essence *of* religion, may be regarded as essential *to* religion, especially to experimental religion. (The distinction is a valid one, as may be seen from the parallel instance of food, which, while not the essence *of* physical life, is essential *to* it.)

It may be said that it is essential to the continued existence of experimental religion, that there should be something in experience which can be taken as "revelation," i. e., as giving evidence of the reality of the divine Being. An obvious form for this "revelation" to take would be the experience of deliverance from some supreme obstacle, or evil, through dependence upon the divine Being. This deliverance from evil through religious dependence experimental religion itself has called "salvation." If no such experience can be counted upon, in response to any discoverable form of religious dependence, it does not seem possible that experimental religion can permanently survive.

The Object of religious dependence does not normally remain to the religious subject a mere Means. The transition is a natural one, from use of an object as means to contemplation of it as end. And the divine Being tends, as the result of man's successful religious dependence, to become an Object of contemplation and an End, as in worship with its more or less mystical developments.

But in addition to what is essential for the continued being of religion, we may ask, what further is essential to the well-being of religion? Here several elements may be enumerated. First, social life in general, with its influence in the development of ideals and interests for the sake of which man is impelled to be experimentally religious. Again, and more particularly, there is the social life of the religious community, with its religious experience to be shared by the individual, and its religious history and traditions. Moreover, the well-being of experimental religion would seem to call for the social expression of religious

thought (in a creed),* of religious feeling (in a form of worship), and of the active impulses fostered by religion (in a certain way of living). It would seem well for the religious individual, in freely choosing his creed, ritual and rules of conduct, to consider seriously, in addition to his individual needs and experiences, the possible requirements or contributions of the social life in general, and of the experience and history of the vitally religious community in particular.

Finally, it would seem essential for the most effective preservation and propagation of experimental religion, that there should be an institution, a social religious organization, devoted primarily and specifically to these ends. The church is ostensibly such an institution, and the true (or truest) church is that one which most effectively preserves and propagates the best form of experimental religion. And that is the true form of church government which, in any given situation, is, *religiously* considered, the most efficient.

But if we are to have an adequate empirical basis for an estimate of the value of religion, we must see it not only in its general nature, but in the main lines of its development, and especially in such progress toward a definite goal as its historical and contemporary forms may manifest. The question of the genesis of experimental religion, i. e., its differentiation from pre-religious life, has been much discussed; but, with the definition of its essence here adopted, its origin as a life-reaction definitely different from other experimental adjustments will naturally be sought in some crisis or situation in which other adjustments are felt to be inadequate or even futile, and which calls for some form of adjustment to and dependence upon the Being or Power felt to be the supreme and ultimate court of appeal.

But not only has religion been differentiated from other phases of human life; within the developing life of religion itself many differentiations have taken place. The primary, or most general, internal differentiation of religion has been into regional groups of religions. Asia has been the cradle of practically all the great historic religions, and the primary differentiation of religions is connected with three divisions of Asia—the East (China and Japan), the South (India), and the West (Persia, Mesopotamia, Arabia, Syria and Palestine). The religions of the East are in the main practical, this-worldly, ethical.

* The function of the thought-element in religion has been interpreted by the rationalists as simply the anticipation, in terms of the imagination, of a true philosophy; by the subjectivists, as simply the symbolic expression of religious feeling; in current pragmatism, as simply to be used as instruments of adjustment in a comprehensive way to the situation with which the subject is confronted. As a matter of fact, religious ideas are related to cognition, feeling and action, and discharge all three functions.

The religions of the South are mystical, other-worldly, philosophical. The religions of the West have tended to combine both qualities.

The secondary differentiation of religions is into various religions which, for the most part, bear different historic names. They are in the main national religions, or else religions which have grown up around some personal founder.

The tertiary differentiation of religions is into sects. The general distinction between a religion and a sect, historically speaking, is that religions differ as to the "revelation" they recognize as authoritative, while sects differ simply in their interpretation of that revelation, but differ (or have differed) sharply enough to have found it desirable to form different fellowships.

The differentiations of religions have been occasioned mainly by more or less accidental circumstances, such as geographical location and individual leadership. But in the development of religion other factors have been at work which are more universal in human nature and which have been tending, especially in recent times, toward unification. Speaking broadly, these are the common needs and interests of developing humanity, experience and observation of the consequences of certain ways of acting (especially in religion), and rational reflection upon the facts of experience. These factors tend to refine and spiritualize religion. More particularly, they tend to make experimental religion more rational and more moral. Experimental religion becomes moral by being made a means to moral reinforcement, i. e., through dependence upon the Absolute Being (interpreted as moral) for power to realize moral ends. This moral element is a content of experimental religion to which there can be no rational objection; and as a matter of fact, as development in rationality and in scientific outlook continues to discredit superstitious beliefs and practices, experimental religion seems faced with the necessity of having to develop in morality, or die. Among critical thinkers religion either comes to be rationalized out of existence or else tends to be rationalized into its final and universally acceptable form; and this form, whatever else it may be or may not be, must be thoroughly moral. But besides these two criteria of religious progress, viz., development in rationality and development in morality, there is also a third, conservation of vitality. Religion at its best, then, whatever else it may be, must be religion in its most vital, most moral and most rational form.

Having arrived at these conceptions, first, of the essence of religion, and second, of religious progress and religion at its best, we may now turn to the critical philosophy of religion proper. What is the value of religion?

There is not much dispute as to the worth of fundamental religion.

Its value for life is obvious. So too ought to be its value for knowledge—at least for the knowledge of values.

There is more difference of opinion, and hence more call for philosophical criticism, with reference to the value of experimental religion. A critical philosophy of religion must examine the value of experimental religion, first as an end, and then as a means to life and to knowledge—especially knowledge of reality.

The primary and only adequate basis for the appreciation of experimental religion as an end is the religious experience in its immediacy.

The discussion of the value of religion for life will include a consideration of its effectiveness as a means toward the moral, social, æsthetic, hygienic, economic and political well-being of humanity. Here the basis for judgment must be empirical information, historical, psychological and sociological. In general, it may be said, the way in which experimental religion promotes the fundamental human interests other than the moral is *not so much* directly, as by strengthening and developing the moral will of the individual, which then becomes a more effective means toward social, æsthetic, hygienic, economic and political well-being.

In all of these estimates of value, exaggeration must be guarded against. Sceptical prejudice tends to deny to experimental religion any positive value, while mystical religion tends so to absolutize the value of religion as to deny any ultimate value to anything else. A more critical view will recognize that in historic religion, or intimately associated with it, there has been on the one hand much that has been unfavorable to the moral, social, æsthetic, hygienic, economic and political well-being of humanity, and on the other hand much that has tended to promote these human values.

But the crucial question always is with reference to the value of religion *at its best.* Here the question may be raised as to whether experimental religion in its most vital and spiritual (e. g., moral and rational) form is not indispensable to fundamental religion at its best, and hence also to the highest possible well-being of humanity.

The final test of the value of religion is the critical examination of the knowledge-value of its essential experiences and ideas. Here we enter the field of the philosophy of religious knowledge, or religious epistemology. Now the situation in the philosophy of religious knowledge is closely parallel to that which confronts the student of the problem of knowledge in general. We shall therefore turn aside momentarily into the field of general epistemology.

Almost all theories of knowledge readily fall into one or another of three main classes, a dualistic doctrine and the two corresponding one-sided monisms. Thus, with reference to the problem of direct (i. e.,

immediate, or presentative) knowledge of physical objects, there are three groups of views. Idealistic monism claims that physical objects are directly presented in perception, inasmuch as physical objects are nothing but "ideas"—this term being used either in the psychological sense (in subjective idealism) or in the logical sense (in objective idealism). Realistic monism in its extreme form claims that physical and other objects are directly presented in sense-experience, and retain all their qualities of color, sound, and the rest, even when they are not presented to anyone. Epistemological dualism maintains that what is immediately presented, or experienced in the realm of sense, is a representation of the independently real object, and not the object itself. This position is incurably agnostic; there is always room for doubt as to whether the independent object, if it exists at all, is really knowable through the appearance which is supposed to represent it. The strength of epistemological dualism is in its hard-headed, critical common sense, but it is weak in philosophical construction, and it leaves its task unfinished. The two one-sided monisms, on the other hand, are strong in imaginative construction, but weak in critical common sense. They give point to the remark of William James, that this unifying or monistic tendency, with its enthusiasm for construction and a completed system, may need to be "snubbed" occasionally. It tends to be unfair to facts and to well-established distinctions of ordinary human knowledge. It may be a mark of ingenuity, but it is no mark of critical common sense, to suggest, as the idealist does, that material things are ideas, either in the (psychological) sense of mere dependent contents of states of consciousness, or in the (logical) sense of general meanings, definitions, or systems of propositions. Nor, on the other hand, is it in accord with the common sense scientific principle called the "law of parsimony" to suppose, with the extreme monistic realist, that all the actual and possible variations of quality in sense-presentation are real independently of their relation to the perceiving subject.

Instead of any of these three sorts of theory of direct knowledge, or acquaintance with objects, we would suggest a view which may be called *critical monism*. It stands for the attempt to combine with the critical common sense of the dualists a little more of the constructive enthusiasm of the monists. In other words, critical monism may be described in preliminary fashion as undertaking to be as monistic as it can be, while remaining as critical as it ought to be. It would find the solution of the problem of immediate knowledge in the view that the physical object is a certain quantum of energetic reality, existing in certain relations independently of the perceiving subject, and that, *on occasion* of certain subjectively produced sense-qualities and apper-

ceptive elements, it is presented directly to the perceiving subject *in* the complex of these sense and apperceptive elements. Thus, without departing from critical common sense, or violating the conservative scientific principle of parsimony, agnosticism would be avoided, and the problem of acquaintance, or immediate knowledge, solved.

But in addition to the problem of acquaintance, or direct awareness, general epistemology must face the problem of indirect knowledge, or how to arrive at valid certainty of the truth of judgments. This involves two problems, the problem of truth and the problem of valid certainty, or proof.

On the problem of truth we find, as in the case of the problem of acquaintance, two extreme and one-sided monisms (in this case, intellectualism and anti-intellectualism, of which latter the chief form is current pragmatism) and a corresponding extreme dualism. According to intellectualism truth is the identity of predicate with subject, or of the idea with the thing. But here the criticism is obvious, that on this definition there can be no true judgment that means anything, for in any significant judgment there must be a distinction between the subject and the predicate. According to current pragmatism, on the other hand, truth is the practical value of the idea in dealing with the thing. Here, as distinguished from intellectualism, which makes truth inaccessible, truth is made too accessible. Whatever judgment serves the purpose with which it is made is, for him who makes it and for the time being, true. According to dualism, truth is in some cases the one thing, and in other cases the other, intellectualism being valid in the realm of pure reason, and pragmatism in the realm of practical reason. This simply adds to the difficulties of extreme intellectualism the absurdities of extreme pragmatism.

Critical monism, however, in distinction from the two one-sided monisms and the dualism, would maintain that the truth, or trueness, of judgments is a quality which may be predicated of them when the predicate, or idea, is *practically* identical with the subject-matter which it represents. In other words, in making a judgment one is justified in regarding as true that judgment in which the idea represents the reality sufficiently for all the purposes which ought to be considered in deciding between the judgment and its contradictory.

With reference to the problem of proof, it may be sufficient to say that the true method is that union of rational with empirical procedure which we find in scientific verification. This, too, is, as distinguished from opposite one-sided monisms and an extreme dualism, a *critical monism*.*

* For a more detailed discussion of the problem of acquaintance, the problem of truth, and the problem of proof, see the writer's recent work,

But in the philosophy of religion our concern is not so much with the problem of knowledge in general, as with the more particular problem of religious knowledge. Here we have, as in the other case, the problem of direct, immediate knowledge, or acquaintance, and the problem of indirect, mediate knowledge, or proof of the truth of judgments.

The fundamental problem of religious epistemology, the problem of religious acquaintance, is the problem as to whether there ever is, in religious experience, direct awareness—or something corresponding to what is ordinarily styled perception—of the religious Object, the divine Reality; or, in other words, whether the Divine is ever revealed within the field of human religious experience. Here again, as in general epistemology, most theories fall into one or another of three classes, two one-sided monisms and a corresponding extreme dualism. On the one hand there is an idealistic monism with reference to the religious Object. Of this there are, as in general epistemology, two main forms, subjective idealism and objective idealism. As subjective idealism in general philosophy is the result of a fallacious snap-judgment to the effect that psychology shows physical objects to be mere complexes of "ideas" in the sense of dependent psychical contents, so subjective idealism in religion is the result of a fallacious snap-judgment to the effect that the psychology of religion shows the religious Object to be nothing but an idea, or a complex of ideas, in the human mind; in other words, that, so far as religious experience, when scientifically examined, can say, there is no God but the God-idea. (Cf. Feuerbach and, more recently, Leuba and many others.) This would be a positive solution of the problem of religious knowledge, it is true; but its adoption would mean the acceptance of atheism. It would affirm the possibility of immediate knowledge of the religious Object, since what it means by the religious Object is the product and mere dependent content of the human mind. But the psychology of religion no more proves the truth of subjective idealism with reference to the religious Object than the psychology of sense-experience proves the truth of subjective idealism with reference to the physical object.

Objective idealism regards the object of religious experience as it does all other objects of experience, viz., as a logical idea or a complex of logical ideas. In its more abstract form it asserts the eternal reality of this ideal Object, apart from any conscious existence. In its more concrete form it asserts the reality of this ideal Object in an all-inclusive conscious experience. In the end it would substitute for the God of practical, historical religious experience, the complex unity of all

" The Problem of Knowledge," Macmillan, New York, 1915; George Allen *and Unwin, London,* 1916.

logical ideas in the "Absolute Idea," interpreted either as the abstract, or as the "Concrete Universal." But all this is open to two main criticisms. On the one hand, as an argument it is fallacious; it involves a snap-judgment to the effect that there is an existential identity between the object defined and its complete definition, viewed either as a mere system of eternally valid relationships, or as consciously entertained in a completely rational Experience, wherein all imperfect and mutually conflicting experiences and thoughts are included and unified. On the other hand, from the point of view of experimental religion this doctrine is in the one form atheism again, and in the other form simply a refined, intellectual species of idolatry. In its abstract form, while it affirms a transcendent divine entity, it fails to attribute to this entity any existence, but leaves it a mere logical Essence. In its concrete form it substitutes a false god, "the Absolute" of absolute idealism, an artifact of fallacious human thought, for the true God which positive experience claims to discover as an independent Reality.

At the opposite extreme from these one-sided idealistic monisms in the philosophy of religion, which involve, as we have seen, either atheism or a species of idolatry, there is a one-sided realism with reference to the religious Object. Of this the best examples are to be found among the more extreme mystics. Their tendency is to ignore the large element of pure subjectivity in mystical experiences, and to affirm as objectively valid practically all that is suggested in the mystical state. Inasmuch as the characteristically mystical experience involves a highly concentrated contemplation of the religious Object, thought of as perfectly good, there is a tendency for the consciousness of self, of finite individuals and things, of all experienced evils and of the lapse of time, to disappear, for the time being. Then, under the influence of the suggestion that the mystical state is superior, from the point of view of knowledge as well as from the point of view of life, to all non-mystical states, the extreme mystic makes bold to affirm that there is but one Reality, viz., God, and that physical things, finite selves, time and evil are all unreal—mere deceptive appearances in "mortal mind." Thus extreme mysticism is, in the philosophy of religion, what the more extreme forms of the new realism are in general philosophy, and the criticisms which may be offered in the two cases are much the same. In both there is a dogmatism and a fantastical departure from critical common sense. In violation of the principle of parsimony, qualities are affirmed to be real which there is no scientific reason to regard as more than the subjective products of subjective activity.

Distinguishing itself from both the idealistic and the realistic form of extreme monism with reference to the religious Object, there is the

very common religious position of extreme dualism, according to which there is a real religious Object, or God, distinct from all ideas of God, but one which never comes within the field of immediate human experience, or direct awareness. Here again, then, the tendency is naturally to agnosticism. If God is never, strictly speaking, revealed within the field of human experience, never the direct Object of human awareness, how can we know what that Object is, or even that any such Object exists. What basis is there for the verification of our theological theories? Some dualistic philosophers are frankly agnostic; but others try, in one way or another, to escape the logical consequences of their dualistic theory. One favorite method has been to point out that even if we are shut up to a subjective world, so far as direct experience is concerned, we can do two things with these subjective contents: we can describe them, in which case we get the sciences; or we can evaluate them, and our judgments as to religious value can be manipulated so as to give us an ostensibly objective theology. (Cf. Ritschlianism.) Or, according to a rather cheap and easy pragmatism, while we cannot know anything about God on a purely theoretical basis, we are justified in believing in a God of a certain sort, in view of the valuable practical results following from such a belief. Now whatever may deserve to be said concerning the merits of such a position from a practical point of view, provided it is psychologically possible, it remains clear that what it offers is not religious *knowledge*. Theoretically it remains on the ground of agnosticism.

In distinction from all three of these positions in religious epistemology—from idealistic monism, the subjective variety with its atheism and the objective variety with what is either atheism from the point of view of experimental religion or else a species of idolatry; from the extreme realistic monism of mysticism, with its extravagant dogmatism; and from extreme dualism, with its consequent agnosticism—we would advocate again what may be called a *critical monism*. As it is maintained, and with ample justification, in judgments of common sense and science, that independently real physical objects are perceived, experienced, intuited by the perceiving subject, i. e., revealed, or presented to it, in the complex of sense qualities for which the sense-process is responsible; and as the self is similarly revealed, presented, perceived, intuited, directly known to be present, in the complex of psychical activities (perceiving, remembering, thinking, willing, etc.), while these activities in turn are perceived or intuited in their characteristic complexes of psychical qualities; so it may be maintained by the person of adequate religious experience that the religious Object is revealed within the complex of that experience. God, defined as a *dependable* Power, which makes for righteousness in and through the

human will in response to a certain discoverable religious attitude, is an object of direct acquaintance to the man of adequate experimental religion. Not all fugitive suggestions of special developments of the religious consciousness are to be taken as valid; but on the other hand the God of which one has experience in experimental religion at its best can no more be identified with the mere idea of God, from the point of view of practical religion, than the idea of food can be taken as food with satisfaction to the physical life.

With reference to the problem of truth in religion, the situation is quite similar to that which exists in the more general field of knowledge. Extreme intellectualism, extreme pragmatism and extreme dualism all have their representatives and are open in the religious field to the same criticisms as apply in the more general sphere. Only, it is to be noted, the danger of making a careless and extravagant use of pragmatism is probably greater in religious apologetics than in most other fields of thought. What we would advocate, in distinction from intellectualism, current pragmatism and dualism, is the synthesis of the partial truths of intellectualism and pragmatism which we defined, under the term *critical monism*, in connection with the general problem of the nature of truth.

There remains, however, as a part of the problem of religious epistemology, the problem of religious proof, or, in other words, the problem of the scientific verification of religious judgments. This leads us into the whole question of theological method. Here we find, as in the other fields of our investigation, that prevailing points of view are classifiable into two opposite and one-sided monisms and the corresponding extreme dualism.

On the one hand there is the point of view of extreme rationalism, seen in the so-called "speculative theology," undertaking to derive from the categories inherent in "pure reason," by a deductive or dialectical process, the main outlines at least of a theological system, and to furnish for it at the same time an absolute proof. The constructive enthusiasm of the rationalistic theologian awakens interest and expectation at first; but in the light of criticism speculative theology proves unsatisfactory in its religious content and far from convincing in its "proof."

On the other hand we find a variety of theological methods, all rejecting the rationalistic procedure and exemplifying a one-sided empiricism. First, there is mystical theology, taking at their face-value the uncriticized suggestions of the mystical experience. Then there are some one-sidedly empirical methods which we may class together, as eclectic, inasmuch as the doctrines which are to be held, according to them, are *chosen*, i. e., selected for some reason that falls short of

scientific verification. Under this head would be included Schleiermacher's "theology of the Christian consciousness," the Ritschlian theology of religious value-judgments, Troeltsch's "religio-historical" and Wobbermin's "religio-psychological" method, and the pragmatic method of some of the younger American theologians. They are empirical, and consequently vital, but they are not rational enough to provide for scientific theological verification.

But in addition to the one-sided rationalism and the different types of one-sided empiricism in theological method to which we have referred, we must notice the extreme dualism which was characteristic of the method of the older theology. Part of its content (theism, and especially the ontological "proof") it professed to derive in rationalistic fashion, by deductive argument, and the remainder ("revealed theology")—although at second hand—from religious experience. The logical deficiencies of the older rationalistic, demonstrative theism have been pointed out often enough, and need not be dwelt upon here. On the other hand, it may be remarked that when the traditionalistic theologian has claimed to make theology a science, what he has meant by this has been simply a self-consistent system of doctrines, derived by scientific methods of interpretation from his more or less arbitrarily chosen authority. Of scientific method in the proper sense of the term all traditionalistic systems of theology are entirely innocent.

In opposition to both extreme monisms in theological method (the rationalistic and the empirical) and to the extreme dualism, what we may call again *critical monism* would undertake no mere juxtaposition of rational and empirical procedures, but their synthesis in a truly scientific method, i. e., a method related to the discoveries of religious experience as the recognized physical and other objective sciences are related to the discoveries of sense-experience. The content of such a theology would fall under four main heads, viz., presuppositions, empirical data, laws and theory.*

We are now ready to turn to the second main part of our outline of the philosophy of religion, viz., the metaphysical. Here the chief content of the special empirical basis for philosophical construction would be found in the scientific empirical theology to which we have just referred, and which we have undertaken to set forth in the body of this book. We shall therefore pass immediately to the metaphysical construction proper.

* For a more detailed exposition and criticism of the various methods of pre-scientific theology, see the first half of the introduction to this volume. For a further exposition and defense of the idea of scientific empirical theology and for its detailed application, see the whole remaining *content of* the above discussion preceding this appendix.

William James has described metaphysics as an extraordinarily stubborn attempt to think clearly and consistently. This will serve as a definition, if we add that its subject-matter is the nature of reality in its more general aspects and as a whole—in so far as it can properly be viewed as a whole.

The history of metaphysics is not very reassuring as to its future possibilities. While science has made fairly steady progress, metaphysics has seemed to wander about in a circle, like a traveller lost in a fog or in a wood. This may be because, like theology, metaphysics has been without an adequate method.

The most important types of metaphysical method before the world to-day are three. First there is the rationalistic or speculative method, aiming to demonstrate by a deductive or dialectical process, and with almost no reference to the facts of experience, the ultimate nature of reality in general and as a whole. However satisfactory this method may seem to be at first, a critical examination of its many and strangely differing resulting systems goes to show that it has been a failure both as to doctrinal content and as to the certainty of its "proof." *

A second method is that of synthesizing the recognized empirical sciences, theology being, of course, excluded. This leads to results which, in so far as they are positive rather than negative, are fairly satisfactory with reference to certainty. But in doctrinal content the result is unsatisfactory, because incomplete. The method ignores certain fields of great human interest, in which belief has not yet been reduced to scientific knowledge, and so could not reasonably be expected to be fully satisfactory.

A third metaphysical method seeks to remedy this deficiency by effecting a combination of the established results of the recognized sciences with the metaphysical doctrines which are felt to be necessarily bound up with our consciousness of values. For example, the doctrine of human free agency seems bound up with our consciousness of moral values, and the doctrine of the existence of God with our consciousness of religious values. Now this method, if applied with duly critical care, may lead to very satisfactory results, especially with reference to doctrinal content. But with reference to certainty it will always leave something to be desired, because of the failure of a part of its content to arrive at a completely scientific form. It remains in the end a synthesis of scientific information with a set of *postulates*.

As distinguished from the first method, which is defective both in content and in certainty; from the second, which is defective in content, and from the third, which is defective in certainty, we would suggest a fourth metaphysical method, which, it is hoped, will ulti-

* See Chapters VII to IX of "The Problem of Knowledge."

mately prove satisfactory both as to content and as to certainty. This is the method of synthesizing the results of the empirical sciences, theology as an empirical science being included. (In framing the synthesizing theories, it may be remarked, there will still be ample scope for the exercise of *wisdom*, as well as for the use of scientific information.)

Having thus indicated a point of view with reference to both theological and metaphysical method, we are in a position to discuss a little further, before turning to particular metaphysical problems, the mutual relations of metaphysics and theology. We shall refer on the one hand to the reaction of metaphysics against theology and the reaction of theology against metaphysics, and on the other hand to the function of theology in metaphysics and the function of metaphysics in theology.

Metaphysics has shown a tendency to react against theology and to exclude it as a foreign and vitiating element. This has been true of what is generally regarded as the main stream of philosophical thought, from the beginning of the modern period. This reaction against theology has been intended to safeguard the true metaphysical content and its adequate certainty. Now it must be acknowledged that as against so unscientific a type of theology as that of scholasticism, whether Catholic or Protestant, the reaction was largely justified. But if the reaction is against all theology, the consequence can only be, as it has already proved, to lead to results which cannot fully satisfy the human consciousness. There will be deficiencies of content first of all, and also, since there are metaphysical hypotheses which cannot be empirically verified apart from religious experience, deficiencies of certainty as well. However, when once the ideal of theology as an empirical science is realized, it may be no longer necessary for metaphysics to exclude the contributions of theology.

But the repugnance between metaphysics and theology has often been mutual. Theology has shown from time to time a tendency to react against metaphysics. This has been especially conspicuous in the Ritschlian movement. For the sake of conserving both the distinctly religious content of theology and its distinctly religious certainty, it has been maintained that metaphysics should be excluded from theology altogether. And no doubt there has been a large measure of justification for theology's reaction against the prevalent types of metaphysics, with their deficiencies either in content, or in certainty, or in both. But if all metaphysics is to be excluded from theology, if the religious thinker is not to be permitted to submit the religious content and certainty of his theology to a final test in the arena of metaphysics, doubt is sure to be suggested as to whether they would stand such a test. Thus the religious certainty of theology will be

imperilled, and as a consequence in the end its religious content will also be put in danger. If, however, metaphysics should come to be, as we have suggested, a synthesis of empirical sciences, theology being included, there will no longer be any reason for the exclusion of metaphysics from theology.

Thinking, then, of theology as an empirical science and of metaphysics as a synthesis of the sciences, including theology, the mutual functional relations of theology and metaphysics can be readily defined. Theological theory, resting upon empirical theological laws, will furnish material for metaphysical hypotheses, as do scientific theories in general. The elements of scientific theological theory will be tested as to their compatibility with other empirically grounded elements of metaphysics, and will thus be in a position to make their due contribution to the content of metaphysics. But metaphysics will gain thereby in certainty as well, since the theological elements will come with the backing of verification in religious experience. On the other hand, theology in its turn will gain in certainty as a result of having its religiously supported theories finally verified by their proved compatibility with the established results of the other sciences. And not in certainty alone, but in content too, theology may expect to be enriched through its contact with metaphysics, since thereby all the more general results of the sciences will be placed at its disposal. Thus it would appear that while theology and metaphysics are well-nigh bound to be mutually incompatible so long as their methods remain defective, when theology becomes an empirical science, and metaphysics becomes a wise synthesis of the well-established theories of all the empirical sciences, they will each fit into the needs of the other as not only mutually compatible, but as all but mutually indispensable.

We are now in a position to turn our attention to particular metaphysical problems, and in doing so we shall deal simply with those questions of metaphysics which are of special interest from the point of view of the philosophy of religion. These are the problem of substance, or the quality of being, or matter and mind; the problem of the mutual relation of body and mind; the problem of law and freedom; the problem of origins, or evolution and creation; the problem of ends, or mechanism and purpose; the problem of nature and the supernatural; the problem of the One and the many, and the problem of good and evil.

We shall first take up the question of the quality of being, or the problem of matter and mind. With reference to this problem almost all metaphysical theories fall into one or another of three groups, viz., two one-sided monisms (an extreme materialism and an extreme immaterialism) and the corresponding extreme dualism.

Materialistic monism is the doctrine that in its true or ultimate nature all reality is material. Sometimes what is called mind or consciousness has been explained as an extraordinarily fine and mobile sort of matter, sometimes definitely as a secretion of the brain. Sometimes again it has been said to be a mode of motion in the brain, or a form of behavior of the nervous system. In other instances consciousness or mind has been identified with the content of that cross-section of the physical—or, as some would say, "neutral"—realm to which the nervous system responds, either taken by itself, or together with that responsive action. Or again, the whole realm of the psychical has been simply identified with the unreal. Or consciousness has been said to be a mere external relation between different parts of the material world. A veiled form of materialism exists under the form of "energism," according to which matter is ultimately reducible to physical energy, of which the mental is also said to be simply a specialized form. But in all its forms materialism is much more satisfactory in its account of matter than it is in its account of mind. It makes the mistake of regarding the material part of experienced reality as a fair sample of the whole.

Opposed to extreme materialism is another form of one-sided monism, viz., immaterialism. This exists in several forms, viz., spiritualism, idealism and panpsychism. According to spiritualism there is but one sort of substance, viz., spirit, or mind. Material objects are all explained as dependent appearances or ideas in a mind or minds. According to metaphysical idealism all realities, material or spiritual, are to be regarded ultimately as nothing but ideas, or systems of thought. According to panpsychism some realities are made up of thought-content, and all others are made up of feeling-content, or some other sort of "mind-stuff." Immaterialism is much more satisfactory in its account of the mental than in its account of matter. Under the influence of a more or less explicit desire to conserve the "spiritual" values of human life, it has tried to maintain that mental or spiritual reality is a fair sample of reality as a whole.

Both materialism and immaterialism excel in constructive enthusiasm, but they are weak in critical common sense. Quite the opposite is true of extreme dualism. It holds that there are two absolutely different sorts of substance, and two only, viz., matter and mind. Except that they are both substances, existing, some would admit, in time, they have, according to the dualist, no common nature.

Now dualism is a more conservative philosophical position than the fantastical constructions of extreme monism, but it gives the impression of having failed to solve its problem. As an alternative we would suggest a more monistic view, and yet one which seems to be equally

tenable from the point of view of critical common sense, so that it may be brought under the general caption of *critical monism*. In the first place, from this point of view the sharpness of the opposition between mind and matter may be relieved somewhat by raising the question whether there may not be a third sort of reality which is more than matter or physical energy on the one hand, and yet something less than mind on the other. Such would be the "entelechy," or vital factor posited and defended rather plausibly, even if inconclusively, by some recent writers. But whether this vitalistic theory is adopted or not, it would seem possible to reduce the material, or physical, the spiritual, or mental, and the vital, if there be any such thing, to a common denominator. Matter, it may be maintained, is ultimately a form of energy, and when this rather obscure concept of energy is analyzed, it seems possible to interpret it as the activity of some reality. The same may be said of the whole range of the mental or psychical; sensing, perceiving, remembering, imagining, conceiving, judging, reasoning, desiring, feeling, willing—what are these but various forms of the essentially creative activity of the conscious subject? And the intermediate vital factor, if such there be, is also readily interpreted in activistic terms. Thus we have carried the unifying process beyond the point reached by dualism, and yet we have remained upon essentially the same ground of critical common sense.

Closely related to the problem of the ultimate nature of matter and mind is the problem of the mutual relation of body and mind. Among prevalent views we find not only the two opposite one-sided monisms and the corresponding dualism, but a fourth view also, which may be classed as a critical monism. The common materialistic view of the body-mind problem is known as epiphenomenalism, and is to the effect that while material processes cause other material processes and (through the brain) all mental events, there is no mental causation, either of events in the brain or of any changes in the realm of consciousness itself. Immaterialistic views (spiritualism, idealism and panpsychism) would solve the problem by making all real causation mental or psychical, the material (including the cerebral) being a mere dependent psychical content, and not an ultimate or independent reality at all. The dualistic view is known as parallelism, and is the doctrine that there are two parallel causal series of events, the one physical (cerebral) and the other psychical, but that there is no effect of the physical in the psychical series, nor any effect of the psychical in the realm of the physical. A view more consonant with critical common sense than any of these, and at the same time more in accord with the ideal of philosophy as wisdom than either epiphenomenalism or parallelism (since it would make it possible to vindicate the validity

of the moral consciousness), is the widely accepted doctrine of interactionism. From the point of view of interactionism, which we may regard as *critical monism* in the body-mind problem, there is not only causation within the physical series and within the psychical, but also from the physical to the psychical and from the psychical to the physical.

We shall turn next to the problem of law and freedom, or, as some would phrase it, law and chance, or differently still, determinism and indeterminism. On the one hand extreme nomism, or determinism, maintains that the reign of law is absolute, that the complete predetermination of events is universal and without exception. This would render the human consciousness of freedom and moral obligation illusory, which illusory consciousness, as well as all acts that we call morally evil, would have to be regarded as absolutely predetermined. This course of thought, apart from other more purely theoretical objections * would thus run counter to all the more satisfying forms of religion, as well as to any serious morality.

At the opposite extreme from this one-sided nomism, or determinism, there might stand (although it has had few serious defenders) an extreme tychism, or indeterminism, according to which all events would be interpreted as ultimately matters of chance. Not only would the so-called laws of nature themselves be regarded as mere approximations to absolute laws; the whole orderliness or regularity of nature would itself be held to have come into being as habits formed by chance, without any predetermination whatsoever. Human conduct would, of course, be viewed as having no necessary relation to previous or to subsequent character. The obvious moral and religious unsatisfactoriness, as well as theoretical defenselessness, of such a view need not be enlarged upon.

A more common view than this last is the extreme dualism which would maintain that while some events are absolutely law-abiding and predetermined, there are other events which are wholly without predetermining factors and are thus matters of the purest chance. One form of this dualism is found in a certain type of fatalism, which regards the end as absolutely fixed, but holds that there are undetermined or chance events in the intermediate stages. Another form of the doctrine is that which affirms complete determinism everywhere save in human choices, which are regarded as absolutely free and undetermined by any previous events or conditions.

Over against these views may be set a *critical monism*, according to which one might hold that a certain measure of predetermination and some measure of freedom attach to many and perhaps most, if not all,

* See Boutroux: "Natural Law in Science and Philosophy."

events that come within the range of human observation, although the degrees of predetermination and of freedom in different events vary greatly. Even the free decisions of the human will are not to be regarded as matters of chance, but as being very largely determined by antecedent events and conditions, previous character being one of the most important of these conditions. Moreover, in so far as they are free and not predetermined, these free choices of the human will are to be thought of as being creatively determined at the time, in and by the voluntary attention devoted by the agent to certain considerations, which constitute the motive of the action. On the other hand, even the law-abiding events of nature may be regarded as happening in accord with certain regular or, as it were, habitual processes, which need not be thought of as having been eternally predetermined by either blind or conscious forces, but which were perhaps creatively determined in the distant past, whether at once or through a long process of evolution. In particular, if the vitalistic theory should finally claim our assent, it might be maintained that the life-processes, while very largely predetermined, nevertheless are to some extent being determined only at the time of their happening. Such a view as we have outlined would obviously leave room for the validity of both morality and religion.

We shall now turn to the question of origins, or the problem of evolution and creation. On the one hand we find a one-sided evolutionism, according to which all things have come into being through an unfolding or evolution of what was virtually in the pre-existing conditions, without any creative act or process whatsoever. On the other hand one sometimes finds upholders of an extreme creationism, according to which God first produces individual souls by special creative fiat, and then proceeds to create, in cinematographic fashion, all the contents of their individual consciousnesses. Opposed to both of these one-sided monisms, dualism would hold that some events are special acts of creation and not at all evolutionary, while others are purely evolutionary, without any creative element whatsoever. There are different varieties of this dualism, some, for instance, making the origin of species creative and the origin of varieties within the species evolutionary, while others would make the origin of species also evolutionary, reserving explanation by the theory of creation for such events as the first appearance of life and sentience and rational consciousness.

But over against all these views we would set, as a *critical monism*, a doctrine of creative evolution, according to which perhaps not only all processes of life, as Bergson maintains, but all processes whatsoever are both creative and evolutionary. Outside of the organic realm the

case for present creativeness is rather problematical, but the notion seems not inconceivable. In any case, while adhering closely to science and common sense, the view is one which seems eminently favorable to the validity of the moral consciousness and to a vitally religious interpretation of the universe.

We now come to the problem of ends, the problem of purpose, or teleology, or in other words, the question as to mechanism or finalism. Extreme mechanism maintains that all events taking place in the physical world, including not only all vital processes but all human behavior, are purely and without remainder mechanical movements; no purpose has any dynamic potency; there is no force, ultimately, but mechanical and (the essentially similar) chemical force—*vis a tergo;* the whole universe is a gigantic machine, and every organism neither more nor less than a machine within a machine. To begin with, this is pure dogmatism in metaphysics. Science is doubtless justified in looking ever further for mechanical elements in organisms; but that all organic life is remainderlessly mechanical is an hypothesis which not only has never been verified, but of which the full verification would seem to be forever impossible. Moreover, to mention a consideration which should have weight so long as metaphysics remains to any extent philosophy as wisdom, the completely mechanistic view would take all validity out of morality and experimental religion, and indeed all ideal meaning out of the whole life of the human spirit.

On the other hand, extreme finalism upholds the view that all that happens is equally the expression of an all-predetermining purpose. Not only in the adaptations of organisms to their environment, and in events which may be plausibly interpreted as "providential," but throughout the whole range of nature and the whole course of history, all events, good, bad or indifferent, are the expression of one all-comprehensive, infinitely detailed and eternally complete plan. Another form of extreme finalism is that which is characteristic of an extremely subjective pragmatism, according to which everything is for the individual or social group what it is made to be by the purposes of that individual or that group. Both forms of extreme finalism are, from the point of view of critical common sense, absurdly dogmatic; and while the former leaves no room, logically, for morality, the latter leaves no room for experimental religion.

In distinction from both these one-sided monisms an extreme dualism would maintain that there are mechanical events which are in no sense teleological, and teleological events, even in the physical world, which are not at all mechanical. According to this view the Designer is an interloper in the mechanical order, with the constitution of which he has nothing to do. This ancient and supposedly outworn religious

theory has been revived in our day of religious perplexity, in a rather frantic effort to preserve for mankind the benefits of faith, in spite of the depressing insistence of the problem of evil. But such a God would scarcely be an adequate Object of absolute dependence, and, as has been pointed out by critics, the would-be devotee is impelled to seek further, even if it should be only to find the "veiled Being" back of the whole phenomenal order.

Suggestive material for a *critical monism* is found in the vitalism which Bergson defends in opposition to both mechanism and finalism. The vitalists may have gone to an uncritical extreme in their advocacy of this doctrine; but it can hardly be denied that in certain processes of life there seems to be a factor at work (making physical energy more instead of less available, for instance) which is more than mere mechanism, but concerning which we cannot always say that it is a consciously purposive performance. Moreover, deliberate human action is in some measure creative, vitalistic, and not purely mechanical, unless the whole moral consciousness is to be rejected as illusory. And if there is a super-mechanical factor in human life, it is no improper departure from the principle of parsimony to entertain the hypothesis that there may be a vital factor also in the lower forms of life from which the human form has been evolved.

But while vitalism tends to undermine not only extreme mechanism and extreme finalism, but extreme dualism as well, it does not yet amount to a fully rounded-out critical monism. On the problem before us, critical monism, by virtue of its constructive spirit, would suggest that there is perhaps no event in the physical world which does not involve mechanism, and no event in which, in the last analysis, nothing but mechanism is involved. Will this suggestion stand, in the face of a critical examination of available facts?

One side of the problem is easily dealt with. An event may be one in which a machine is made use of, but when the user is taken into account, it is readily seen that the act as a whole includes something more than mechanism. The other element of the problem presents more difficulty. But some recent writers have dwelt with much force upon the apparent adaptation beforehand of the environment to organic life and to its further evolution, and it would seem not unreasonable to entertain the view that in its general features the universe is the kind of universe a worthy Object of religious dependence may have intended it to be.* Not only are the mechanical processes necessary to furnish a dependable platform for the activities of life and consciousness; even the processes of physical life, vitalistically interpreted as not completely predetermined, either mechanically or by purpose,

* See above discussion on "The Problem of Evil."

and yet as not in themselves definitely or consciously purposive—processes which, when so interpreted seem necessarily to lie quite outside the domain of teleology—even these may be included under a teleological view. It seems quite reasonable to believe that such vitalistic processes may have been the necessary precondition of the later evolution of beings endowed with creative free agency. And even the fact of evil choices, made by these human free agents, may be reconciled with the idea of an all-comprehensive purpose in the mind of a Being to whose will these same evil choices are opposed. For if it was intended that men should develop into moral character, it must also have been intended that they should be free agents and should learn in the light of consequences; and this necessarily involves the *possibility* of immoral choices.

We now face the problem of nature and the supernatural. On this topic possible views may be grouped under four heads, as usual, viz., two one-sided monisms (extreme naturalism and extreme supernaturalism), the corresponding extreme dualism, and a critical monism. But these views have a special relation to the views outlined in dealing with the three preceding problems. The main content of what we have called extreme naturalism is involved in extreme determinism, extreme evolutionism and extreme mechanism. Extreme supernaturalism, on the other hand, would be, in its main content, a combination, as far as possible, of extreme indeterminism, extreme creationism and extreme finalism. (If it be objected that an extreme indeterminism and an extreme finalism are not wholly compatible with each other, the reply is that what we mean here by an extreme supernaturalism would not itself be a self-consistent system. The vulgar notion of the supernatural is at once that of an event which is an intended and creative performance, and yet one which could not have been rationally predicted as certain, or rationally expected as probable or even rationally waited for as possible.)

Extreme dualism with reference to the natural and the supernatural, or as it is often called, "dualistic supernaturalism," sums up the three preceding dualisms. It holds that there are events which are exclusively deterministic, evolutionary and mechanical, and others which are exclusively indeterministic, creative and teleological. This position is more widely prevalent than what we have called extreme supernaturalism.

Finally, the main features of *critical monism* with reference to nature and the supernatural are indicated in what has been suggested under the same head in connection with the same three problems. What critical monism here comes to is a natural supernaturalism or a super*natural* naturalism, having among its governing ideas that of an or-

derly universe in which there is ample room for divine and human freedom, in which also origins may be described in terms of creative evolution, and in which mechanical, vital and humanly purposive processes may all be comprehended within one general plan.

We now come to the much-discussed problem of the One and the Many. Is reality fundamentally one, or is it fundamentally many? Here again most views may be grouped under three heads, viz., extreme singularism (a less ambiguous term than the commonly employed "monism"), extreme pluralism, and what may be called again an extreme dualism (of the One on the one hand and the Many on the other).

Extreme singularism, affirming the ultimate reality of the One and denying the ultimate reality of the Many, has existed in various forms. Materialists have claimed to hold to the oneness of the universe, although with doubtful justice; the atomic theory, and similar views, taken as a complete metaphysic, suggest pluralism rather than singularism. But spiritualism, panpsychism and especially metaphysical idealism of the Hegelian type have exhibited considerable affinity for singularism. Vitalism also may take a "monistic" turn, as in Bergson; or voluntarism, as in Schopenhauer. And finally there may be a more neutral singularism, like that of Spinoza, according to which Reality is to us simply the ultimate One, God or Nature, of whom (or which) we know only the attributes of extension and thought. Naturally, the religious affiliations of the more characteristic forms of singularism are with pantheism and hence with either extreme mysticism or practical irreligion. Pantheism obviously fails to do justice to the human individual, and hence, in the end, fails to do justice to the divine Individual as well. It is unfavorable to the vitality of both morality and practical, experimental religion.

Extreme pluralism has denied the reality of any all-embracing, unitary Being. Reality, in its fundamental nature, it regards as a manifold of atoms, or of "monads," or of spiritual substances, or of unified systems of experience and thought, or of both material atoms and spiritual substances. Here the tendency is, in denying the ultimate One, to interpret the result atheistically. Sometimes, however, a greatly reduced God is admitted as one of the society of spirits.

What we may call an extreme dualism of the One and the Many exists in certain more or less deistic systems, according to which the One and the Many both exist, but the One is not in any sense to be found in the Many, nor the Many in the One. The significance of the One for the Many thus becomes doubtful, and finally the existence of the One also becomes a matter of doubt. Deism, like pantheism, tends toward atheism and practical irreligion.

In distinction from extreme singularism, with its pantheism and ultimate atheism; from extreme pluralism, with its more or less explicit atheism, and from extreme dualism, with its deism and final atheism, we would suggest again a *critical monism*, according to which the One and the Many both exist in the closest relations with each other, and yet without either losing its individuality or being merged in the other. The One is immanent in the Many, and yet transcendent of the Many; the Many are immanent in the One, and yet in a sense beyond it.

The particular view we have in mind is to be distinguished from a recent attempt to mediate between singularism and pluralism (Royce: "The Problem of Christianity," Vol. II), in which it is maintained on the one hand that every individual is a community (inasmuch as, in interpreting one's self to one's self, there are three distinguishable selves, viz., the interpreted self, the interpreter and the one to whom the interpretation is addressed); and, on the other hand, that every community, even the universal human community, is an Individual (since it also is unified by a Mediator, or Interpreter, who reconciles individual with individual). Such levelling down of the distinction between the relation of the "I" to the "me" in a personal life, on the one side, and that between different persons, on the other, as if thinking them under the same categories made them for all essential purposes the same relation, may be permissible for the idealistic way of thinking; but if so, it simply adds to the charges in the indictment against idealism. It is a fantastical construction, departing widely from critical common sense, and hence not quite the sort of philosophy we are aiming at under the designation, "critical monism."

Our point of departure must be the critical realism which was the outcome of our epistemological inquiry, and our position here must harmonize with our position with reference to the problem of matter and mind. We would suggest, then, that the universe of physical energy, with matter as one of its forms, and of psychical activity with its products, with the vital factor in addition perchance, be regarded as activities so intimately co-ordinated as to constitute one dynamic and organic system. The physical and vital factors constitute the Body, of which in experimental religion at its best man is aware of coming into inner contact with the immanent divine Spirit. Human beings would then be comparable to organs within the Organism, save that their relative independence is even more pronounced than this analogy would suggest. And yet, with all their freedom and relative independence, they are constantly dependent upon the organic One, not only physically, but also, for the highest possible spiritual achievement, religiously as well.

We now come to the last of the special metaphysical problems which we shall here consider—and it is a problem of critical evaluation as well—viz., the problem as to whether reality is good or bad, or in other words, the problem of optimism or pessimism. Here once more we find two one-sided monisms (extreme optimism and extreme pessimism) and an extreme dualism. Perhaps, too, we shall be driven once more to search out some satisfying critical monism.

Extreme optimism has existed under several variant forms. Under the guidance either of philosophical theory or of mystical fervor, it has been maintained that as All is God, and God is good, so All is good; that evil is an illusion of mortal mind; that whatever is, is right. Or it has been maintained that evil, which is empirically real, is metaphysically a mere negation or defect of being. Or it has been admitted that there is real evil, which we must strive against and overcome; and yet, when we come to see it in "the Absolute," we shall see, it is claimed, that this same evil was a good thing—to overcome! (This may be true of some kinds of "evil" to a limited extent, but not of moral evil. It is only the *possibility* of moral evil involved for the immature in the possibility of moral good that is to be consented to as better than its opposite.) Or finally, it has been maintained that while the world is not yet completely good, it has been infallibly predetermined to become what it ought to be "in God's good time," whatever man may do or leave undone. The main objections to all such one-sided optimism are, in the first place, that it fails to derive its estimate from the available facts, but imposes an arbitrarily chosen theory upon the facts; and in the second place, that logically and psychologically it tends to lull and paralyze the moral will. This latter consideration makes it possible to show that extreme optimism ultimately refutes itself. If one is to be a consistent optimist, one must be able to hold that the truth will act favorably upon the moral will, and thus, through struggle and victory, make the individual free from evil. But extreme optimism acts unfavorably upon the will; hence, according to optimism itself, an extreme optimism cannot be true. The only way to evade this *reductio ad absurdum* is to refuse to recognize any real distinction between good and evil. But to take that stand leads the extreme optimist into another self-contradiction. Whether All is good, or not, not all accept this doctrine; hence there is this much evil in the universe, if no other evil is real, viz., the evil of the error of mortal mind's supposition that evil is real. Hence *not quite all* is good!

It has been remarked that a pessimist is a person who has to live with an optimist. There is this much truth in the observation, that an extreme pessimism tends to be begotten of an extreme optimism,

by way of reaction. But it is a part of the case against pessimism that it is ordinarily regarded as calling for a psychological explanation, as a morbid and abnormal development of thought. Hindu religious philosophy has been pessimistic as regards this world and the present life, but it offers a ray of hope in the prospect—not particularly inviting to Occidental minds—of absorption in the One, a sort of negative state of peace in "Nirvana." Pessimism as represented by Schopenhauer and Hartmann, however, is more absolute still. Its only true Nirvana is unconsciousness, non-existence. The tendency of extreme pessimism obviously is to discourage both religious dependence and moral effort.

Distinct from both the optimistic and the pessimistic form of extreme monism, there is an extreme dualism, found, for example, in the older Christian orthodoxy, according to which for some individuals the outlook into the eternal future is absolutely optimistic, without a shadow upon it, while for other individuals the outlook is just as absolutely pessimistic, without a single ray of hope.

When we turn to the ways of *critical monism*, seeking to avoid the extravagances of monistic construction on the one hand, and yet to pass beyond the unsatisfying commonplaces of dualism on the other, we find fruitful suggestions in the meliorism advocated by William James. According to this practical and common-sense doctrine, the world contains much good and much evil, and while for the future the good is in danger, it nevertheless has a fighting chance of coming out victorious; and this chance will be distinctly improved if we devote our best efforts to that desirable end. As James himself indicates, the view is moralistic, rather than religious.

What we would suggest, however, is, while not a less moral, a more religious meliorism. While it is only a good fighting chance of success at any particular time that good ever has in its struggle with evil, and while the best efforts of all moral wills are needed, it is important to note that through a certain dynamic religious relation the moral will can be greatly reinforced and made more effective in its conflict with evil in individual lives and in social institutions. Indeed, if humanity finds and maintains the right religious relation, the destruction of moral evil, and of all that flows from it, will be assured.

In the way, then, that we have here summarily indicated, we would undertake to verify the statement that theology and metaphysics stand in need of each other, and that the outcome of the metaphysical part of the philosophy of religion confirms the favorable verdict with reference to religion at its best, as announced at the close of our sketch of the critical philosophy of religion.

As for *critical monism*, in so far as it is to be regarded as a method

of thought, rather than as a set of resultant doctrines, we would characterize it as follows: it stands for the attempt to temper constructive enthusiasm with critical common sense; it has learned to be suspicious of prevalent one-sided monisms on the one hand and extreme dualisms on the other, and takes up a critical attitude toward them, in order to avoid their errors as well as to profit by the partial truths which most of them contain; and at the same time, recognizing the desirability of system, in so far as it does not become unfair to the facts, it seeks to become as monistic as it can be, while remaining as critical as it ought to be. May it not be then that critical monism is the true *novum organum* for philosophy as wisdom? *

* Critical monism as a method stands in sharp contrast with a certain philosophical procedure which we may perhaps not unfairly stigmatize as an *uncritical monism*. The reference is to the Hegelian dialectic, as it is sometimes understood. It has been the fashion in certain quarters—McTaggart's works on Hegelianism furnish a conspicuous illustration—after a first acknowledged momentary dependence upon experience in order to provide the initial thesis and get the dialectic started, to represent the subsequent philosophical procedure as an affair of the purely rational evolution of thought, and any further appeal to experience for verification as wholly superfluous. The original thesis is speculatively negated, and then thesis and antithesis are speculatively reconciled in a "higher synthesis," which, in turn, becomes the thesis of the next stage in the dialectical development. Now an apriori dialectical procedure of this sort may be allowed to pass, provided it is understood that philosophy is to be nothing more than a speculative game; but it is certainly very far from being an adequate method for philosophy as wisdom. Judged by practical, empirical tests, it often happens that a thesis is true, and its logical antithesis simply false; in which case there is more truth in the original thesis than there would be in the proposed speculative synthesis. As opposed to any uncritical monism of this type, our critical monism would undertake to be thoroughly empirical, critical and scientific, both as regards the constituents which are to be admitted to a place in the proposed synthesis, and with reference to the final verification of this synthesis itself. Instead of merely reconciling opposing systems of *ideas*, and *including* them, in intellectually omnivorous fashion, in a "higher synthesis," it would return to an examination of the *facts*, retaining an interest in transcended points of view chiefly with a view to seeing that in the resultant synthesis their errors are *excluded*. Only that is to be included which has satisfactory empirical support.

Of course this thesis-antithesis-synthesis formula may have, when used with sufficient self-restraint, a certain pedagogical value in the interpretation of the history of thought in general and the history of philosophy in particular. But even in this connection it must not be forgotten that there are many non-dialectical factors in the formation of most world-

views and systems of philosophy, and that there may be more than one "synthesis" of the same two antithetical systems. For example, the philosophical method we have styled critical monism might be *interpreted*, by one favorably disposed toward it, as involving a synthesis of the partial truths together with the exclusion of the erroneous elements of the Hegelian dialectic and that "rough and ready" method for philosophy as wisdom which it is now the fashion to label "pragmatism." But a deliberate, speculative or "high and dry" synthesis of Hegelianism and pragmatism would not necessarily result in a procedure exactly identical with our critical monism.

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